
Centennial
of the
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
(1921-2021)





Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (TUS100)

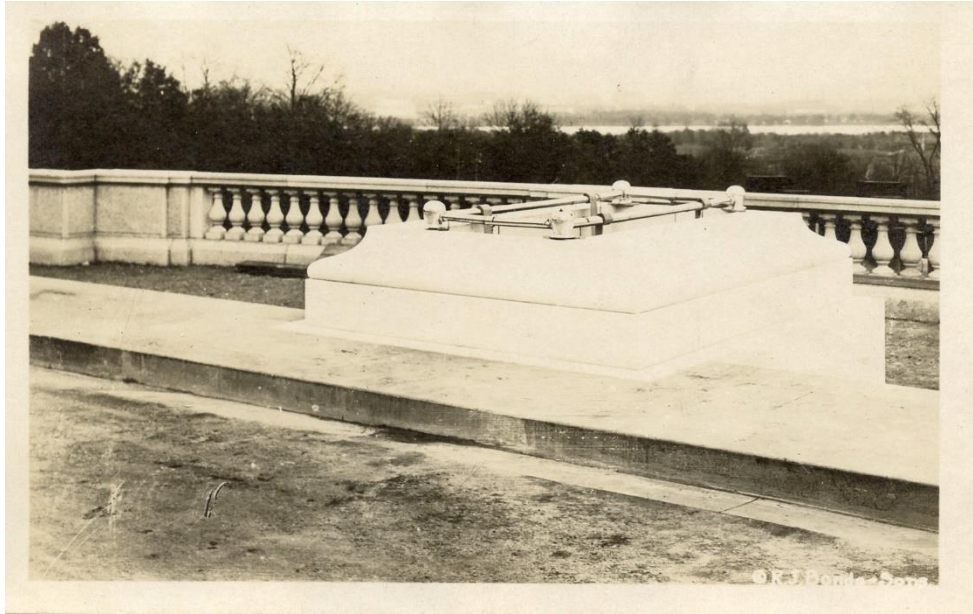
“It is hoped that the grave of this unidentified warrior will become a shrine of patriotism for all the ages to come, which will be a source of inspiration, reverence and love of country for future generations.”

– Congressman Hamilton Fish III (NY), March 9, 1921

Congressman Fish served in World War I with the 369th Infantry “Harlem Hellfighters” earning a Silver Star for action in combat in France, and this war time experience led him to propose legislation which created the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

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“The burial of the Unknown Warrior should give the whole country an opportunity to express in a National way, their tribute to the glorious dead. It will bring consolation and assuage the grief of the twelve hundred families whose sons died unknown and unidentified, for each and every family will proudly claim this body as that of their own son”

– Congressman Hamilton Fish III, March 9, 1921

On behalf of the Society welcome,

We view the Centennial not only as a celebration to remember the burial of the World War I Unknown Soldier, but an opportunity to reflect on ***what the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier means to America***. On three instances since 1921, the remains of unknown servicemen have been interred at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, with the remains of the Vietnam Unknown Soldier removed after modern science identified the serviceman. The crypt remains empty, but a marker was placed honoring all those still missing in action (MIA/POW) which underscores the larger purpose of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and rings true to the legislation that created the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by Congressman Hamilton Fish who viewed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as a focal point to bring all Americans together—that its meaning be not limited to the Great War and the exclusive claim of that War’s veterans. ***I hope you will join us in the national endeavor.***

- Gavin McIlvenna, President & Centennial Committee Chairman
president@tombguard.org



Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (SHGTUS)

- Founded by veterans in 1999, the Society is a non-profit 501(C)(3) educational organization, created by current and former members of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Honor Guard to support mission of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier platoon, and the members of the Honor Guard that stand the watch as directed by Congress since 1926, and the eternal vigil since 1937.
- Our mission and the Society are defined and guided by the higher meaning of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier: That the sacred shrine is about America's sacred duty to never forget or forsake all those who have served and sacrificed on behalf of America in times of war or armed conflict. Our standards of practice and procedure are tempered by our discipline as members of the Honor Guard Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and fully informed by the trust placed in our hands by Congress to represent America at this sacred shrine.
- Outreach includes:
 - Providing subject matter expertise to patriotic and public service organizations by conducting free educational programs and projects that seeks to unite our fellow Americans around love of country.
 - Mentoring and support of the current Tomb Guard Platoon while they stand the watch, and network when they transition to civilian life.
 - Educational scholarships for current and former Tomb Guards and their families to ease the burden of obtaining higher education.
- Membership includes current and former Tomb Guards dating back to 1938, families of deceased Tomb Guards, and likeminded veterans and our fellow Americans that understand the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is a sacred shrine that has, and continues to be a place where all of America can come together and be reunited with those who have served and sacrifice on behalf of America.

National Defense Authorization Act of 2017

Congress passes and the President signs a National Defense Authorization Act every year that authorizes actions to defend our nation. In some special circumstances, the Act includes direction to the Department of Defense to execute certain significant undertakings so important to Congress that they are included in this annual legislation. In 2017, Congress included a section dedicated entirely to the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. **Existing law directs the Secretary of Defense to execute this Centennial Commemoration** as shown below:

SEC. 1093. PROGRAM TO COMMEMORATE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER.

(a) COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall conduct a program to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. In conducting the commemorative program, the Secretary shall coordinate, support, and facilitate other programs and activities of the Federal Government and State and local governments.

(2) WORK WITH NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In conducting the commemorative program, the Secretary may work with nongovernmental organizations working to support the commemoration of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. No public funds may be used to undertake activities sponsored by such organizations.

(b) SCHEDULE.—The Secretary shall determine the schedule of major events and priority of efforts for the commemorative program in order to ensure achievement 1 of the objectives specified in subsection(c)

(c) COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES.—The commemorative program may include activities and ceremonies to achieve the following objectives:

(1) To **honor** America's commitment to never forget or forsake those who served and sacrificed for our Country, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.

(2) To **highlight** the service of the Armed Forces in times of war or armed conflict and contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and nongovernmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.

(3) To pay **tribute** to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States in times of war or armed conflict.

(4) To **educate** the American Public about service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States of America and the principles that define and unite us.

(5) To **recognize** the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during times of war or armed conflict.

(d) NAMES AND SYMBOLS.—The Secretary shall have the sole and exclusive right to use the name “The United States of America Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Commemoration”, and such seal, emblems, and badges incorporating such name as the Secretary may lawfully adopt. Nothing in this section may be construed to supersede rights that are established or vested before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) COMMEMORATION FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the establishment of the commemorative program under subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury shall establish in the Treasury of the United States an account to be known as the “Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Commemoration Fund” (in this subsection referred to as the “Fund”). The Fund shall be administered by the Secretary of Defense.

(2) DEPOSITS.—There shall be deposited into the Fund the following:

(A) Amounts appropriated to the Fund.

(B) Proceeds derived from the use by the Secretary of Defense of the exclusive rights described in subsection (d).

(C) Donations made in support of the commemorative program by private and corporate donors.

(D) Funds transferred to the Fund by the Secretary of Defense from funds appropriated for fiscal year 2017 and subsequent years for the Department of Defense.

(3) USE OF FUND.—The Secretary of Defense shall use the assets of the Fund only for the purpose of conducting the commemorative program. The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations regarding the use of the Fund as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(4) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts deposited under paragraph (2) shall constitute the assets of the Fund and remain available until expended.

(5) BUDGET REQUEST.—The Secretary of Defense may establish a separate budget line for the commemorative program. In the budget justification materials submitted by the Secretary in support of the budget of the President for any fiscal year for which the Secretary establishes the separate budget line (as submitted to Congress pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code), the Secretary shall:

(A) identify and explain any amounts expended for the commemorative program in the fiscal year preceding the budget request;

(B) identify and explain the amounts being requested to support the commemorative program for the fiscal year of the budget request; and

(C) present a summary of the fiscal status of the Fund.

(f) ACCEPTANCE OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT SERVICES.—Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary of Defense may accept from any person voluntary services to be provided in furtherance of the commemorative program. The Secretary shall prohibit the solicitation of any voluntary services if the nature or circumstances of such solicitation would compromise the integrity or the appearance of integrity of any program of the Department of Defense or of any individual involved in the program.

(2) REIMBURSEMENT OF INCIDENTAL EXPENSES.—The Secretary may provide for reimbursement of incidental expenses incurred by a person providing voluntary services under this subsection. The Secretary shall determine which expenses are eligible for reimbursement under this paragraph.

(g) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the end of the commemorative program, if established by the Secretary of Defense under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing an accounting of the following:

(1) All of the funds deposited into and expended from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Commemoration Fund.

(2) Any other funds expended under this section.

(3) Any unobligated funds remaining in the Fund.



SHGTUS Efforts to Implement the NDAA 2017

"...bring home the body of an unknown American warrior who in himself represents no section, creed, or race in the late war and who typifies, moreover, the soul of America and the supreme sacrifice of her heroic dead."

– Congressman Hamilton Fish III, March 9, 1921

Our Centennial Committee was formed in 2013 to help America develop appropriate activities and ceremonies that recognize and fully express what the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier means to so many of our fellow Americans.

Informed by our service at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and in later years the many requests of public service and veterans groups to speak about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and our service, we established core values that gave shape and direction to our work on the Centennial:

- The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is not just about World War I; it is about every individual who has ever served -or will ever serve- and America's promise to them that they will never forget them
- This is that sacred place we remember why millions of our countrymen have fought and died for our liberty and our freedom, and it fosters a unifying national identity that transcends our differences of the politics, race or religion.
- The Centennial commemoration *must* be inclusive and not centric to Washington DC or Arlington National Cemetery, as there are many who cannot travel, reaching into all our nation's cities, towns and hamlets.
- Emphasis must be on education to not only commemorate this anniversary, but to ensure that the principles and values that define us, the form of government we have chosen to ensure them, and the reasons why so many have died to preserve them are well known to those that follow us.
- Non-federal entities can share in the responsibilities by organizing and funding national activities to augment the federal initiatives.
- We have witnessed profound grief, sorrow, respect, reverence, pride and gratitude of millions of Americans as they stand before the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This is a powerfully individual experience and we have learned that the languages of music, flowers, prose and poetry can be called upon to give full expression of this experience. Each must be fully explored to allow the fullness of America's fidelity to its sacred duty.

The initiatives mentioned below are organized by the several principles stated earlier. At the core of this and future opportunities suggested by various groups that we work with, is the belief that like the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Centennial presents an opportunity to unite the American people around love of Country. These principles drive our belief that the Centennial offers the opportunity to develop infrastructure and the “ corporate” will to make continuous our people’s connection with those who have served and sacrificed for this country as examples and inspiration as we face today’s and tomorrow’s challenges to our freedom.

Ceremonies play a crucial part in communicating our message, but to have the lasting service that we believe is now before us and to implement the spirit and letter of the mandate of the NDAA of 2017, we must again emphasize education and inclusion.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier fosters a unifying national identity that transcends our differences of politics, race or religion, and we have applied our best efforts to plan, develop and initiate several projects/activities suitable for this solemn occasion of national importance to be in line with the NDAA 2017 objectives as directed by Congress:

Honor

National Salute – At 11:00 AM on Veterans Day, November 11, 2021, our nation would conduct a truly national salute by having all churches, fire stations, and other buildings ring their bells twenty-one times 21 times followed by a moment of silence across every corner of our country. This was first conducted during the burial of the World War I Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery in 1921. Since 2015 numerous communities, churches, fire stations and civic and patriotic organizations have already been doing this. This mirrors Title 36 United States Code (USC) § 145 (Veterans Day) which calls upon the President of the United States to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe two minutes of silence on Veterans Day in honor of the service and sacrifice of veterans throughout the history of the Nation.

Flower Ceremony – Starting on November 9, 2021 through November 10, 2021 the public will be provided an opportunity, led by the President of the United States, to individually approach the Tomb and place a single flower before the Unknown Soldiers, and to provide a moment for a silent expression of remembrance and respect. An essential part of the nation’s honoring the Unknown Soldier of World War I in 1921 was the inclusion of the public at large on an individual basis. As the most meaningful opportunity for the country and its citizenry to express their profound mourning, respect, love and gratitude for those who served and sacrificed on behalf of America in this recently concluded war, the federal government provided each person an opportunity to approach the casket as it lay in the United States Capitol Building to have a private moment with this fallen son of America. To recapture that very personal involvement of the American people, we have proposed to Arlington National Cemetery the Carnation Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that will allow for the same outpouring of emotion as close as possible, while preserving the security, sanctity and integrity of their graves while minimizing impact on operations within the cemetery.

Highlight

Naval Seminar – We proposed to the Navy History and Heritage Command to form and conduct a joint Naval Symposium on November 9, 2021 which could be held at the historic Navy Yard in Washington DC. This event would highlight the history of the ships and their crews who carried the Unknown Soldiers home to the United States, including the participation of the United States Marine Corps, United States Navy, and the United States Coast Guard who also participated in the 1958 and 1984 missions to return

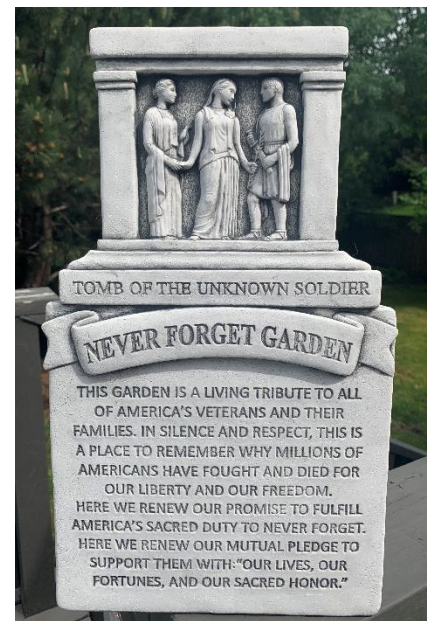
Unknown Soldiers home to the land of their birth. This would also include events and ceremonies that occurred upon the Unknown Soldiers arrival at the Navy Yard, and subsequent transmittal to the US Capitol.

United State Postal Service (USPS) Stamp – A creation of a series of stamps commemorating the Centennial Anniversary (1921 - 2021) of the interment of the Unknown Soldier from World War I at Arlington National Cemetery. In 2015 we requested that the Postmaster General of the USPS, authorize and create a series of stamps that can help us tell the story of a national identity created, and continuously nurtured, by the diversity of all those who have served and sacrificed on behalf of America in times of war or armed conflict. This series of stamps can re-unite our generation with those millions that have fought and died so that America would be free, by telling their story through the artform of the postal stamp and depicting America’s story of service and sacrifice and proudly claiming the national identity and our cherished values that define us as Americans. ***As of August 1, 2021 this has not been adopted by USPS.**

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (S.3290 and HR.6635) – Commemorative coins are produced by the U.S. Mint pursuant to an act of Congress are legal tender that celebrate and honor American people, places, events, and institutions. Since 1998, only two coins may be authorized for any given year. ***These bills were introduced in Congress in 2018 but failed to gain enough congressional support and the act is no longer active.**

Tribute

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Never Forget Garden – Starting in 2019 a nation-wide effort to encourage individual and public gardens be planted to remember our veterans, first responders, and their families; now and for all time. Much like the Victory Gardens of World War II, the *Never Forget Garden* is a nationwide invitation to plant individual and public gardens as a visual way to represent America’s sacred duty to never forget. We are currently seeking support to dedicate a *Never Forget Garden* at the U.S. Capitol, and the White House much like the first one planted at start of the Purple Heart Trail at George Washington’s Mount Vernon. We have proposed that during official overseas ceremonies **October 20-26, 2021**, that the **planting of white rose bushes** from France near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, as well as near the Hotel de Ville in Chalons-en-Champagne, providing a living memorial to the bonds of respect and friendship between our two nations.



Journey Home– We are working to present a special concert, or series of concerts, in 2021 that will take American back to 1921 through the music, speeches, and hymns used during the ceremonies surrounding the World War I Unknown Soldier telling of the selection, honoring journey home and burial of this Unknown Soldier. A member of The United States Army Band “Perishing’s Own” (TUSAB) has created a musical arrangement that tells the story of America’s fulfillment of its sacred duty to never forget or forsake all those that have served and sacrificed on behalf of America and highlights the journey home of the World War I Unknown Soldier. A special concert has been proposed to Arlington National Cemetery for inclusion in the official commemoration events and will be capped by the TUSAB musical arrangement dedicated to the Centennial as it tells the story of America’s fidelity to its sacred duty to never forget.

Centennial Procession - On November 11, 2021 a recreation of the procession of the World War I Unknown Soldier 100 years later from the White House to Arlington National Cemetery showing the world how the United States is fulfilling America's sacred duty to never forget or forsake all those who have served and sacrificed in times of war or armed conflict on behalf of America. A proposal has been presented to Arlington National Cemetery that a procession escorting the President of the United States (POTUS) from the White House to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on November 11, 2021 where the National Veterans Day Observance will take place honoring the events in 1921 led by President Harding and former President Wilson.

Educate

Free Educational Presentations - Former Sentinels conduct free presentations upon request to the public that focus on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, each of the Unknown Soldiers buried on the plaza of the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery, and all those who have served and sacrificed since the American Revolution. For the Guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Society this is our primary mission, one which we have faithfully executed on behalf of the American people since 1926. Any member of the public can request a presentation, and we work with former Tomb Guards in the local area to meet these requests: <https://tombguard.org/society/programs/>

Centennial Week - During the week of November 8-11, 2021 will be the culmination of all projects and events that are focused on highlighting the history behind the Unknown Soldiers selection, transportation, and ceremonies. These will include lectures/presentations by the United States Capitol Historical Society, SHGTUS, authors, allies, military units, and walking tours created by Arlington National Cemetery Historians.

Recognize

Overseas Ceremonies – During October 2021 we will reaffirm the ancient bond between allies by conducting and participating in ceremonies surrounding the 100th Anniversary of the World War I Unknown Soldier selection and departure from France. The citizens of France demonstrated profound sorrow and respect as our Unknown Soldier from World War I was selected at the Hotel de Ville by Sergeant Younger in 1921, and throughout his return during the difficult journey home for the final time. We are planning a series of Overseas Ceremonies be added to the official commemoration program from **October 20-26, 2021** starting with special tours of the four major battlefields and associated cemeteries that the four unknown candidates were selected from. A ceremony on **October 23-24, 2021** in Chalons-en-Champagne will coincide with the events 100 years ago when Sergeant Younger made the selection, and this would be followed by a ceremony on **October 25, 2021** at the Port of Le Havre, where the USS *Olympia* accepted the Unknown Soldier and began the difficult journey home. Finally, representatives of veteran's organizations and the United States would honor the French Unknown Soldier from World War I buried under the Arc de Triomphe on **October 26, 2021**.

Foreign Military Medals Project – Throughout 2021 leading up to Veterans Day 2021 special articles and lectures will be conducted highlighting the nations who bestowed upon the World War I Unknown Soldier their highest medal for valor. To ensure that our nations allies contributions and sacrifices are highlighted we have contacted various Embassies in the United States to capture and present the history of the medals of valor presented by their nations to our Unknown Soldier in 1921. Discovering and presenting the history why and how these medals of valor were presented on behalf of so many of our allies from the Great War also supports the educational component of the NDAA 2017, and we recommend the inclusion of representatives of our allies in all events and ceremonies in the United States and overseas will further strengthen our ties on the world stage.



Advocacy Check List – How you can be involved now

“To have a great idea, have a lot of them.”

- Thomas A. Edison

Advocacy

- Use your organizations network and social media to advocate Centennial programs/events
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/societyofthehonorguard/events>
- Advocate for the installation of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier *Never Forget Garden* at the U.S. Capitol; the White House, all federal installations that already have plantings, especially the Veterans Administration hospitals and cemeteries.
 - <https://tombguard.org/centennial/#garden>
- Develop and include elements of the *National Salute* in Veterans Day events
 - https://tombguard.org/centennial/#national_salute
- Encourage and support programs that will educate. E.g. Immigration and Naturalization Service for our legal immigrants becoming U.S. citizens.
 - ANC Education package (*under development*)
 - Educational programs that already exist. E.g. The U.S. Capitol Historical Society, the American Legion, Veterans Administration Cemeteries, and many others
- Contact your congressional leaders and ask them to advocate for the Centennial Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial Commemorative Coin Act (H.R. 1805 & S.639)
 - <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1805>
 - <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/639>
- Write to and encourage the US Postal Service to develop a series of Stamps that tells the story of service and sacrifice by millions of our countrymen
 - https://tombguard.org/centennial/#usps_stamp

Proactively champion

- Research and educate your organizations on their participation in 1921, 1958, 1984 and 1998 events that surround the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and ceremonies for each.
 - https://www.maritimedelriv.com/storage/app/media/Publications/Beacon/Issues/Beacon_Fall_2019.pdf
 - <https://www.navalhistory.org/2019/01/08/world-war-one-uss-olympias-sailors>
 - https://tombguard.org/assets/images/news/Olympia-Marines-With-the-Hand-of-God_v2.pdf
- Dedicate your national convention theme in 2021 to the Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
- Develop contests whose prize is visits to Washington, D.C or Arlington National Cemetery, meeting with Congressional representatives, Governors, or special visits and tours to local military bases or national assets.

Promote

- Free educational presentation by SHGTUS <https://tombguard.org/society/programs/>
- Create informal working relationships with other patriotic and civic organizations that seek to unite our country around love of country.
 - Non-binding association can facilitate coordination and pooling of resources for projects too large for one organization
 - Bring focus on issues or conditions generally not known, but that gain higher visibility and perhaps support.

Sponsor an event/project

- Donate or sponsor to Society programs (tax deductible) <https://tombguard.org/society/contribute/>
 - Centennial Fund (*to be used for the Centennial activities/events*)
 - Scholarship Fund
 - Education Program
- Participation and/or assist with funding for Overseas Ceremonies at Chalons-en-Champagne (FR) on 23-24 October 2021, and Le Havre (FR) on 25 October 2021
- Participation and/or assist with for the Joint Naval Symposium at the Navy Yard (DC) on 9 November 2021, and creation of a historical – educational marker where the Unknown Soldier first touched American soil.
- Develop local art, essay, poetry, and music competitions with the Centennial as a theme.
- Participation and/or assist with for ceremonies at the USS *Olympia* (PA) on 25 October 2021
- Participation and/or assist with for the Flower Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery (VA) on 9-10 November 2021
- Participation and/or assist with the Journey Home Concert

(website) <https://tombguard.org/>

(facebook) <https://www.facebook.com/societyofthehonorguard/>

(twitter) <https://twitter.com/SHGTUS>

(youtube) <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU8kLEQcWljiWqOS0XLENTw>

(flickr) <https://www.flickr.com/photos/146270331@N03/>

(instagram) <https://www.instagram.com/shgtus/>

These are just a few suggestions on how you, your organizations, and our leaders can get involved with this historic commemoration. It is our hope that communities across the country will embrace the Centennial and develop projects and events that are unique to their American way of life.



Key Dates

World War I Unknown Soldier (Tomb of the Unknown Soldier)

December 21, 1920 – Congressman Hamilton Fish III (R-NY) introduces legislation for the return of an Unknown American and his burial in Arlington National Cemetery

March 4, 1921 - Joint House Resolution 426 signed by President Woodrow Wilson, authorizing the return of an Unknown American and his burial in Arlington National Cemetery

October 22, 1921 – Four American officers were ordered to exhume candidates from four different cemeteries in France. Once a candidate had been found it was transported to Chalons-sur-Marne to the Hotel de Ville, where the four candidates remained under the watch of French Honor Guard.

October 24, 1921 – Sergeant Edward Younger selects the World War I Unknown Soldier from four candidates in Chalons-sur-Marne (today Chalons-en-Champagne), France. The World War I Unknown Soldier is transported to Paris via train where he remains overnight under the watch of an US Army Honor Guard and one uniformed member of the American Legion.

October 25, 1921 – The World War I Unknown Soldier is transported to Pier d’Escale at Le Havre, France via train where he is honored by Minister Andre Maginot with the Croix de Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur. Crew and a detachment of US Marines from the USS *Olympia* (C-6) assume control of the World War I Unknown Soldier and begin transit to the United States under escort of the USS *Ruben James* (DD-245).

November 9, 1921 – The USS *Olympia* (C-6) arrives at the Naval Gun Factory and transfers the World War I Unknown Soldier to the 2nd Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment. The Unknown Soldier is transported via caisson to the US Capitol where he lays in state upon the Lincoln catafalque.

November 11, 1921 – The World War I Unknown Soldier is transported via caisson to Arlington National Cemetery where, after funeral services led by President Harding, is buried in the plaza of the Memorial Amphitheater.

November 17, 1925 – First civilian watchman is posted at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier while Arlington National Cemetery is open to the public.

March 2, 1926 – House Joint Resolution 185 direct the War Department to *“maintain a special guard...whose duty it shall be to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington from sunrise to sunset...”*

March 25, 1926 – First Military Guard is posted at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

August 29, 1931 – Remodeling construction on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier commences under the direction of Lorimer Rich (Architect) and Thomas Jones (Sculptor).

April 9, 1932 – Newly designed Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, as seen today, is completed and unveiled to the public.

July 2, 1937 – Guard shifts are modified to 24hrs a day.

World War II and Korean War Unknown Soldiers

June 24, 1946 – Congress directs the selection and burial of an Unknown American from World War II to be buried “near or beside” the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

August 3, 1956 – Congress direct the selection and burial of an Unknown American from the Korean War to be buried “near or beside” the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

May 12, 1958 – The World War II Trans-*Atlantic* Candidate selected in Epinal American Military Cemetery, France by Major General Edward O’Neil and transported to Naples, Italy. From here the USS *Blandy* (DD-943) transports the candidate to a pre-designated location off Cape Henry, Virginia.

May 15, 1958 – The Korean War Unknown Soldier is selected at the Punchbowl National Cemetery, Hawaii by Master Sergeant Ned Lyle.

May 16, 1958 – The World War II Trans-*Pacific* Candidate selected at the Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii by Colonel Glenn Eagleston. Both the candidate and the Korean War Unknown Soldier are transported by VR-21 aircraft to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where they are placed aboard the USS *Boston* (CAG-1), and transferred to a pre-designated location off Cape Henry, Virginia.

May 26, 1958 – The World War II candidates and the Korean War Unknown Soldier are transferred at sea to the USS *Canberra* (CAG-2) where the final selection of the World War II Unknown Soldier is made by Hospitalman First Class William Charette. The candidate not selected was buried at sea. Both the World War II and Korean War Unknown Soldiers were then transferred at sea to the USS *Blandy* (DD-943), under escort of the USCGC *Ingham*.

May 27, 1958 - The USS *Blandy* (DD-943) arrives at Pier 3 of the Naval Gun Factory.

May 28, 1958 – The World War II and Korean War Unknown Soldiers are transported via caisson to the US Capitol where they lay in state.

May 30, 1958 - The World War II and Korean War Unknown Soldiers are transported via caisson to Arlington National Cemetery where, after funeral services led by President Eisenhower, are buried to the west of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier within crypts on the plaza of the Memorial Amphitheater.

Vietnam Unknown Soldier

June 25, 1981 – Congress direct the selection and burial of an Unknown American from the Vietnam War in House Joint Resolution 299.

May 17, 1984 – The Vietnam Unknown Soldier is designated at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by Sergeant Major Allan Kellogg. From here the USS *Brewton* (DD-943) begins the transport the Vietnam Unknown Soldier to Alameda Naval Air Station in California.

May 24, 1984 – The Vietnam Unknown Soldier arrives at Travis Air Force Base, California and remains overnight.

May 25, 1984 – The Vietnam Unknown Soldier departs Travis Air Force Base via C-141B and arrives at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland and is transported via hearse to the US Capitol where he lays in state for three days.

May 28, 1984 – The Vietnam Unknown Soldier is transported via caisson to Arlington National Cemetery where, after funeral services led by President Reagan, are buried to the west of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier between the crypts of the World War II and Korean War Unknown Soldiers on the plaza of the Memorial Amphitheater.

May 14, 1998 – The Vietnam Unknown Soldier is disinterred from the crypt and transported via hearse to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology for DNA testing.

June 30, 1998 – Remains identified as Captain Michael Blassie, USAF.

Correct title: ***“Tomb of the Unknown Soldier”*** not “Tomb of the Unknowns”: The title was first used by Congress on March 2, 1926 (House Joint Resolution 185) when they directed the War Department to *“maintain a special guard...whose duty it shall be to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington from sunrise to sunset...”*.

When the public/media uses “Tomb of the Unknowns” they do discredit to the individual sacrifices of the unknown Americans selected to represent each conflict. The empty crypt cover was inscribed with "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen" is a reminder of the commitment of the Armed Forces to the fullest possible accounting of missing service members.

