

White Rose Bouquet of the Centennial, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

In keeping with Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Circular Letter #4, planners for all Centennial floral tributes are encouraged to use White Roses in wreaths and floral arrangements.

THE CREATION

All long-stemmed White Roses should make up the bouquet. The most reliable source of roses will be from florist shops however they can be garden-grown if available. It is recommended that orders for white roses be placed early to insure they are available. Roses can be kept fresh until the time of the ceremony using water-filled floral tubes (from florist) placed on each stem, or by placing stems of the bouquet in a nearby vase of water.

White Baby's Breath (*Gypsophila*) should be used within the bouquet to emulate "falling snow." The white roses used symbolically stand in for the rose 'Niphetos', believed to be the rose in the bouquet placed by Sergeant Younger upon the casket he selected to be America's Unknown Soldier in 1921. 'Niphetos' means "falling snow" in Greek.

Bouquets can be made up of either eleven (11) roses or twenty-one (21) roses.

The number eleven is immensely symbolic on Veterans Day, when ceremonies are held on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the date and hour of Armistice Day at the end of World War I, and the date and hour the Unknown Soldier was laid to rest.

The number twenty-one (21) is equally important as the number is associated with the highest military honors: the 21-gun salute, three volleys of seven rifles at graveside, and the 21 embedded in the traditions of the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – 21 steps and the 21 second count during the facing movements and manual of arms.

The Bouquet should be tied with white ribbon from 1 to 2 inches wide, with streamers the same length as the stems of the roses. Stems should all be stripped of foliage under the ribbon and below.

Alternately, the presenter or the organizer of the event might opt to add a second ribbon of another color to tie the rose stems, if that color ribbon makes the presentation more meaningful to the presenter, the organizer, or to those assembled. Also, organization lapel pins or military cockades may be attached to the ribbon if desired.



BOUQUET OF 11 WHITE ROSES and BOUQUET of 21 WHITE ROSES
with WHITE BABY'S BREATH (*Gypsophila*)

THE PRESENTATION

In these ceremonies, the White Rose Bouquet of the Centennial should be presented with the reverence deserving of the moment. Honored Presenters of the White Rose Bouquet should hold it with both hands:

The right hand should hold the bouquet just below the white ribbon.

The bouquet should lay on the presenter's left forearm.

On presentation, the White Rose Bouquet of the Centennial moves to the presenter's open left palm and is presented with both arms extended, a symbol of respect in many cultures.

Optionally, the White Rose Bouquet of the Centennial may be presented (in the same manner as above) on a 30" square of black linen, silk or satin cloth (or in the absence of cloth, on a sheet or sheets of black tissue paper).

Such presentation on cloth represents the American military cockade (also of cloth) established by General George Washington in 1780 – black with a white center – designed as a symbol of the historic alliance between America and France. (French troops responded by wearing an Alliance Cockade of white with a black center.)

