The Indiana Soldiers & Sailors Monument, located "on the Circle" in the center of downtown Indianapolis, has come to symbolize the city of Indianapolis and the state of Indiana. Originally designed to honor the memory of Indiana's Civil War Veterans, it now commemorates the valor of all Indiana military men and women in all wars prior to World War I. Since 1902, the Monument has stood as a tribute to the past and an inspiration for the future as the only Civil War Monument of its size in America dedicated to the common soldiers and sailors. More than 24,000 Hoosiers gave their lives to preserve the Union. Indiana furnished a higher percentage of its men and military age to the Union army than any other state except Delaware.

Monument Circle
The circle on which the Monument now sits was originally laid out for the Governor's Mansion, which was completed in 1837. The Mansion, however, was never occupied by a Governor honor. It was torn down in 1857 and the circle became a park. In 1862, long before the Civil War ended, a letter to the editor in the Indianapolis Daily Journal suggested that the state build a monument to recognize "all who from Indiana who fell in defense of the Union." Governor Oliver P. Morton suggested the same in 1867. Finally, in 1887, the state legislature made a grant of $200,000 and appointed a Monument Commission. A competition for architects was held to submit designs for the proposed monument. In early 1888, Bruno Schmitz, an architect from Berlin, Germany, was named the winner.

The Monument
The cornerstone for the Indiana Soldiers & Sailors Monument was laid on August 22, 1889. By the time the Monument was dedicated on May 15, 1902, the complete cost of design and construction was nearly $600,000. It has been estimated that building the Monument consumed more than 500,000 man-hours of labor. The Monument is 284 feet high, with a base of 210 feet in diameter. The building consists of five elements: the base, the pedestal, the Gateway, the statue of the Monument, and the hands of Liberty (the hands of Liberty hold the Shield of Union). The total building cost was approximately $300,000, with an additional $300,000 spent on ornamentation.

The Monument was dedicated by Governor George D. McGalliard on May 15, 1902. The dedication ceremony was attended by thousands of people, and the event was covered extensively by the press. The Monument was opened to the public on May 15, 1902, and has since become a significant landmark in Indianapolis.

The Monument is a tribute to the soldiers and sailors of Indiana who served in the Civil War. The Monument is located on Monument Circle in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana. It is a significant example of the neoclassical style of architecture and is considered one of the finest examples of public sculpture and one of the nation's most outstanding war memorials.
Soon after the First World War, Indiana decided to build a memorial to Hoosiers who gave their lives, and to all service men and women who served during the "Great War.”

In 1920 the Indiana General Assembly created the Indiana World War Memorial and Indiana War Memorial Plaza. This five-block plaza, plus the city block on each end, make a 7-block area known as the Indiana World War Memorial Plaza Historic District. In 1994 it was listed as a National Historic Landmark. World War Memorial Plaza Historic District. Closely related to this plan was the effort to bring the American Legion National Headquarters to Indianapolis. The Legion consid- ered many cities including Minneapolis, Washington, D.C., Kansas City, Detroit, and Indianapolis. The proposed War Memorial Plaza and the Indiana World War Memorial Building gave Indianapolis the advantage.

The Plaza displays the planning concepts of classi- cal formality and grand monumental scale of the “City Beautiful” movement of the early twentieth century. Since its opening it has become one of the most popular downtown areas for residents and visitors alike. Architects Frank B. Walker and Harry E. Weeks designed the Plaza, including the War Memorial Building, in 1923.

Peace, Victory, Liberty, and Patriotism.

University Park (University Square)

Federal Building

Located just south of University Park is the Federal Building. The building is not part of the Plaza but is the southernmost block of the Historic District. It was originally built to house Federal courts, offices, and the main city post office. The exterior is of Indiana limestone and is detailed in neoclassical style.

University Park (University Square)

Benjamin Harrison

The Benjamin Harrison statue honors an Indianapolis resident who became President of the United States. Prior to his presi- dency, Harrison command- ed the 70th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment and was brevetted to the rank of Brigadier General in the American Civil War. The statue itself is bronze, while the remaining portions are limestone. The plaza and bench were designed by Henry Bacon, the statue by Charles Niehaus.

The statue was unveiled in 1908.

Abraham Lincoln

At the southeast corner of the park is Henry Hering’s statue of Abraham Lincoln. President Lincoln is cast in bronze, seated in a chair, his right hand raised in a gesture of peace. Dressed in a morning coat, Lincoln sits on a shawl-draped chair with his top hat and gloves neatly tucked beneath the fringe of his coat.

Schuyler Colfax

Toward the center of the park is the Schuyler Colfax statue. Colfax, an Indiana native, was Vice President under Ulysses S. Grant after the Civil War. This was the first statue to be placed in the park, originally at the southwest corner of the proposed War Memorial Plaza. After the Civil War, citizens of Indianapolis established a fund to develop the land into a park.

Schuyler Colfax stood at the center of the park. The statue was placed there in 1923.

The statue was designed by Lorado Taft.

Pro Patria

On the south steps of the War Memorial facing University Park stands the bronze sculpture Pro Patria. Pro Patria is a Latin phrase meaning “for country.” The sculpture, by Henry Hering, features a young man reaching heavenward and draped in an American flag. Pro Patria was cast in seven pieces by Roman Bronze Works of Corning, New York, and took three years to complete. When set in place in 1929, the 24-foot sculpture was the largest bronze casting ever made in America.

Pro Patria was cast in 1929.

The pedestal features a youthful woman dancing in classical toga with a cymbal in each hand.

Sculptures on the fountain include jumping fish and eight life-sized fig- ures of dancing chil- dren holding hands.

Two small bronze sculptures flank the fountain: a Wood Nymph and Pan. Myra Reynolds Richards designed the originals in 1923. Both sculptures are now replicas due to theft of the originals over the years.

Interior of War Memorial

The building has three main rooms. On the upper level is the magnificent Shrine Room. Symbolizing peace and unity, the room is made of materials from all the Allied nations and is symbolic of the world-wide nature of World War I. It is a solemn setting that promotes awe and a deep sense of respect for the sacrifice of those who fought and died for the principles of liberty, democracy, and civilization, in the World War and in the wars that have followed. The main floor houses exhibit space, administrative offices, two 75-seat meeting rooms, and the 500- seat Pershing Auditorium. The meeting rooms and auditorium are available for public use for a nominal fee. Listed in the building are the names of all Hoosiers who participated in World War I. The building also houses a FREE Military museum that por- traits Indiana’s military history from the Revolutionary War to modern times. Among the items on display are military firearms, uniforms, artillerу, captured uniforms, weapons, and equip- ment, a Mexican War era bronze 6 pound cannon and limber, the battle control center of the fast attack nuclear submarine USS Indianapolis, a Korean War era helicopter, a nuclear capable Navy Tenter missile, and a Desert Storm Humvee.

The building was completed in 1929.

The Indo-