

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK & MUSEUM



**Presented by: GENESIS for
the VETERANS MEMORIAL
PARK MUSEUM
COMMITTEE, INC.**

PHASE 1 - WAR MEMORIALS

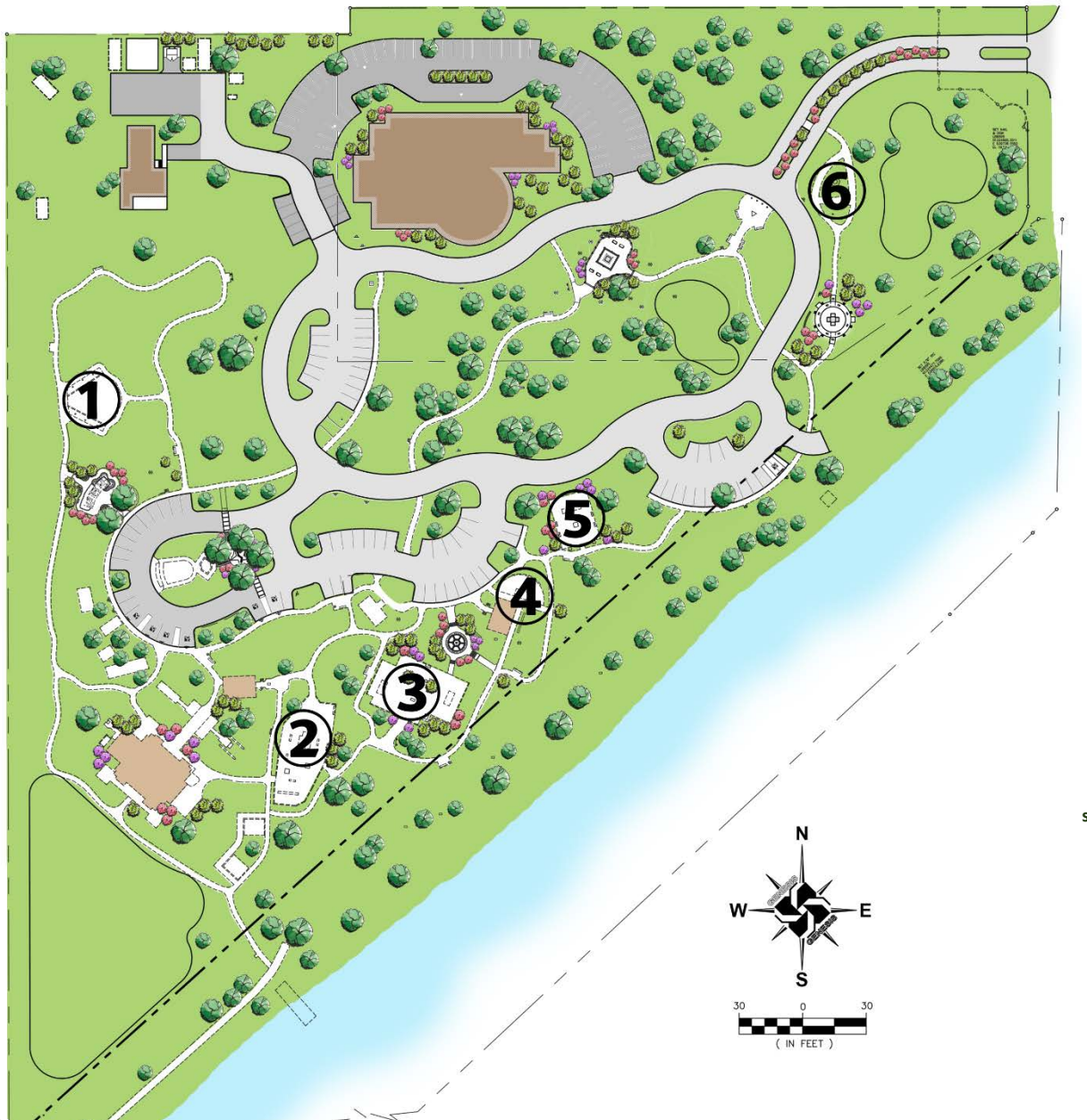
The Hillsborough County Veterans Memorial Park and Museum was established to provide a centralized location to which all citizens and visitors could memorialize and honor the Veterans of all eras. This submittal is intended to include the six memorials constructed within the last three years.



OVERVIEW

The Hillsborough County Veterans Memorial Park and Museum is located south of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at 3602 US Highway 301 N. Tampa, Florida. The park incorporates land owned by the Southwest Florida Water Management District adjacent to the Tampa Bay Bypass Canal with land acquired by Hillsborough County in 2005 to create a nearly 14 acre regional park. Future plans anticipate the park containing in excess of twenty memorials and a new museum building, while maintaining functionality as a gathering place and recreation area.

Since 2011 six new memorials have been added to the park. This includes war memorials for Vietnam, Korea and Iraq along with memorials for “Fallen Heroes” and “Committed Forces”.



❖ Regional Quality of Life Benefit

The park provides a regional gathering place for remembrance of those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom as well as honoring all those who have served along with providing a reflection of the extraordinary price of armed conflict. The park also serves as a grounds for regional ceremonies on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and Patriots Day, along with numerous other events. These functions are achieved without the appearance of a cemetery while still maintaining the park's reputation as a well-designed park for reading, reflection, meditation, picnicking, gathering as a family or going for a jog.

❖ Benefit to the Environment

The park provides a 'green' environmental area adjacent to the Tampa Bay Bypass Canal along a mostly industrial section of US 301. Master infrastructure design and development by Hillsborough County in 2011 includes stormwater treatment and attenuation facilities to minimize pollutant loading on the canal that the more industrial uses common in the area could have negatively contributed to. The design and construction of the various memorials on the project emphasize maintaining the existing majestic oak trees on site and further enhancing the environment by planting native drought tolerant vegetation.



Figure 2 - Citizens participate in one of the many annual ceremonies that occur at the park.

❖ Innovation

The Veterans Park provides the opportunity for individual memorials to be designed and constructed by a memorial group for the armed conflict. Each group receives some financial support from Hillsborough County but also undertakes fundraising efforts for their memorial. Though each is unique, they are all 'plugged into' the master plan for a unifying effect. The individual memorial committees are overseen by the Veterans Memorial Park Museum Committee, Inc. along with input and oversight from Hillsborough County Real Estate and Facilities Services, Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation and the Hillsborough County Veterans Affairs departments. This innovative teaming, design and funding helps to foster unique concepts and ideas while attempting to involve the various stakeholders.

❖ Cost Effectiveness

By utilizing a combination of public and private funding along with vendors who are willing to contribute time, sculptures, and materials at discounted rates, the Park Committee has been able to stretch a relatively small budget to create dramatic spaces. Further advantages of preserving the natural settings and avoiding trees is that additional funds are able to be focused on the actual memorial items. The County has also contributed labor from County work crews to help cut costs, along with project management and oversight. With County contribution budgets at an average of approximately \$80k per memorial for all design and construction, the level of detail, commitment by the project team and overall excellence of the memorials should not be ignored.



Figure 3 – Public attendance at the park has increased since the addition of the new memorials.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL – 2010 - 2012



Figure 4 - VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL (View looking west into the memorial) - The design incorporates a variety of materials to blend with the natural habitat provided by the park.

The Vietnam Veterans memorial includes two Vietnam era helicopters mounted on pedestals to simulate in flight operation. The pedestals include dedication plaques purchased by donors.

While the helicopters are visible from US 301 adjacent to the park site, the true centerpiece of the memorial is the six foot tall, twelve foot long granite wall. The three six inch thick solid granite panels that make up the wall include over 150 names of the fallen soldiers from Hillsborough County. The back side of the wall includes a laser etched mural created from a hand drawn rendering provided by local artist and soldier Tim Lawn.

The two helicopters are a striking image visible as one drives along the US 301



Figure 5
VIETNAM
VETERANS
MEMORIAL
Committee Co-
Chairs Bob Silmser
and Jim Basta
present the hand
rendered display
board provided by
Genesis depicting
the refined
conceptual layout
for the memorial
to assist with
fundraising and
awareness efforts

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The memorials serve as a place of reflection and remembrance for the community.

The addition of the theater of war memorials to the park has resulted in an increase in public events and activities at the park.

The park provides a gathering place for recurring community memorial ceremonies.

All of the memorials undertake fundraising efforts to assist with the dedication and construction.

Genesis provides conceptual planning for several of the memorials on a probono basis as a service to the various Veterans groups and sub committees.

Figure 6 - VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL
The UH-1 "HUEY"
 Helicopter greets visitors to the memorial. The helicopter was oriented to avoid the existing large oak trees and blend with the natural environment. The memorial faces a sidewalk that rings the park and connects the various memorials. This arrangement was selected to emphasize the pedestrian nature of the project. The intent is to prevent the park from becoming a 'drive-thru' attraction.



bridge over the canal. The memorial, consisting of brick and concrete paved areas, Soldiers' Memorial Wall, Nurses' Memorial, personalized memorial bricks, plaques, seating, and landscape plantings, creates a moving and beautiful, yet somber, space. This dramatic memorial, beneath large Oaks on the shore of the Canal, invites contemplation and reflection.

The initial concepts were refined in conjunction with Genesis and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee in 2010. Renderings, landscape plans, irrigation plans and civil engineering plans were provided pro bono by Genesis.



Figure 7 - VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL - The back side of the granite memorial wall displays a laser etched mural created by a local artist.

The granite wall, granite plaques, granite benches and replica Nurses Memorial along with the respective laser etchings were carefully shipped, manufactured and installed by Picture this on Granite from Derby Line, VT.

Structural designs for the helicopter pedestals and mounting structure were provided by Master Consulting Engineers, Inc. (MCE) from Tampa, FL.

The memorial was initially opened on Veterans Day 2011. The memorial was then re-dedicated and renamed on July 21, 2012 in memory of Lt. Col. James Michael Basta, one of the co-chairs of the committee who helped create the initial concept for the memorial.



Figure 8 - VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL - Granite benches were available for purchase as donations to the memorial fund. These benches contain laser etched messages of recognition, remembrance and honor.



Figure 9 - VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL - A dedication plaque indicates naming the memorial in memory of Lt. Col. James Michael Basta one of the co-chairs of the committee and a distinguished Vietnam Veteran.

KOREA VETERANS MEMORIAL – 2013 - 2014

The Korea Veterans Memorial was originally dedicated on July 27, 2013 in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice. The dedication ceremony was attended by veterans, family members, elected officials and the general public.

The memorial includes a central monolithic monument that includes a representation of North and South Korea. Below the monument are the engraved names of over fifty five soldiers from Hillsborough County who gave their lives during the three year conflict.

As part of this memorial the existing monument to Tampa native and Medal of Honor recipient Baldomero Lopez was relocated and incorporated into the Memorial. Mr. Lopez was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 1951 after sacrificing his life during the Incheon Landing in South Korea in 1950.

CULTURAL

The various war memorials include the names or symbols representing the fallen from Hillsborough County.

Donor plaques are available for most of the memorials that allow for recognition of those who served or lost their lives with no limitation on geography.

While similar memorials to specific wars or veterans can be found in other cities in the region, this is one of the only places where the memorials have been centralized into one location.

This park is expected to become a permanent cultural landmark for future generations.



Figure 10 - KOREA VETERANS MEMORIAL – Rendering of the concept provided by Genesis for fundraising and conceptualizing the memorial.

Figure 11 - KOREA VETERANS MEMORIAL - Included in the memorial is a display pedestal for a boulder brought back from Incheon Beach, South Korea. This boulder was provided by the City of Incheon, South Korea as a “tangible reminder of the sacrifices made”. Previously located on top of the Baldomero Lopez monument at Ed Radice Park, it was relocated to the Veterans Park along with the Lopez monument.



Figure 12
KOREA VETERANS MEMORIAL
The memorial incorporates a central monolith that depicts a sculpture of Korea along with the total MIA and POW from the conflict. Like other memorials at the park, care was taken in the design, location and construction of the memorial to incorporate it into the natural park environment while establishing a place of reflection.

The memorial includes provisions to allow for the addition of bronze statues on top of several pedestals placed around the central monolith along with the ability to also have one on top of the monolith. These statues can be added in the future as funding becomes available.

Genesis provided conceptual planning, coordination and site plans for the project on a pro bono basis.

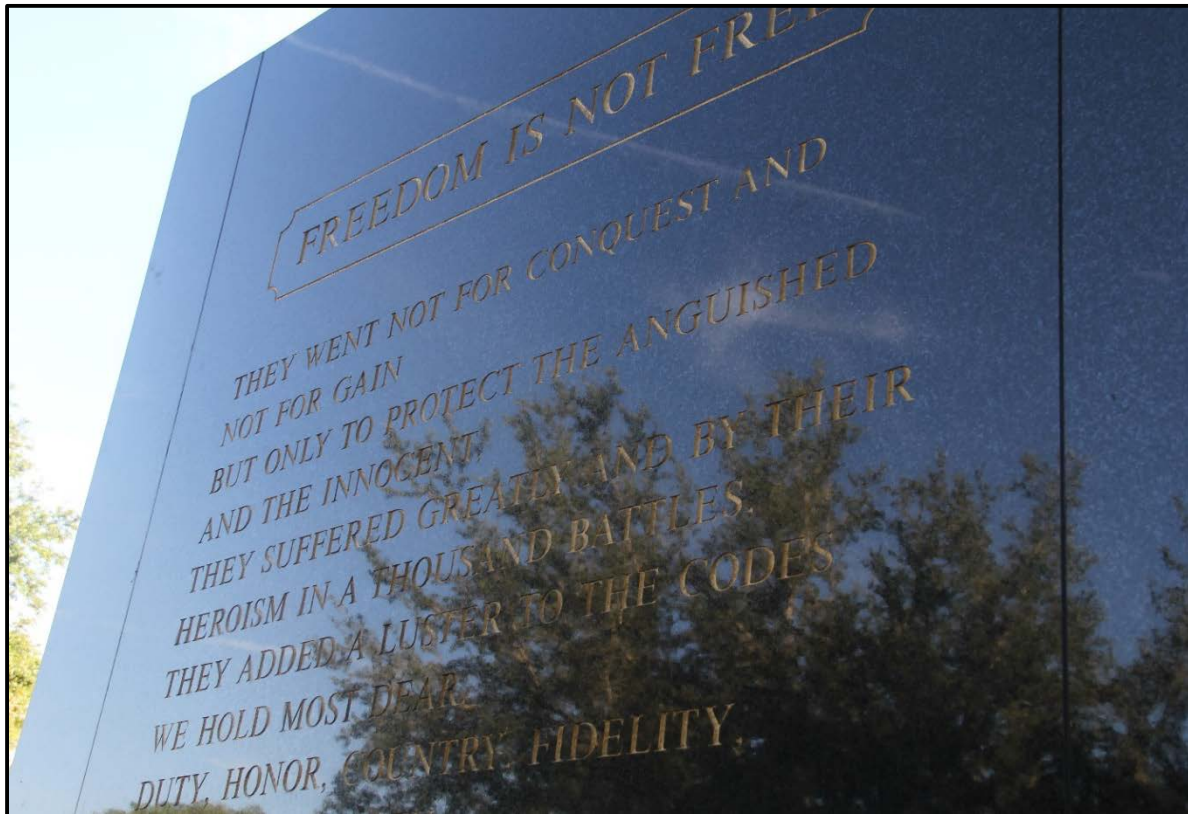


Figure 13 (above)
KOREA VETERANS
MEMORIAL

The over twelve foot tall black granite central monument includes the engraved gold lettered inscription; "Freedom is not Free" along with a quote from William Sessions, the former FBI director and Korean War Veteran.

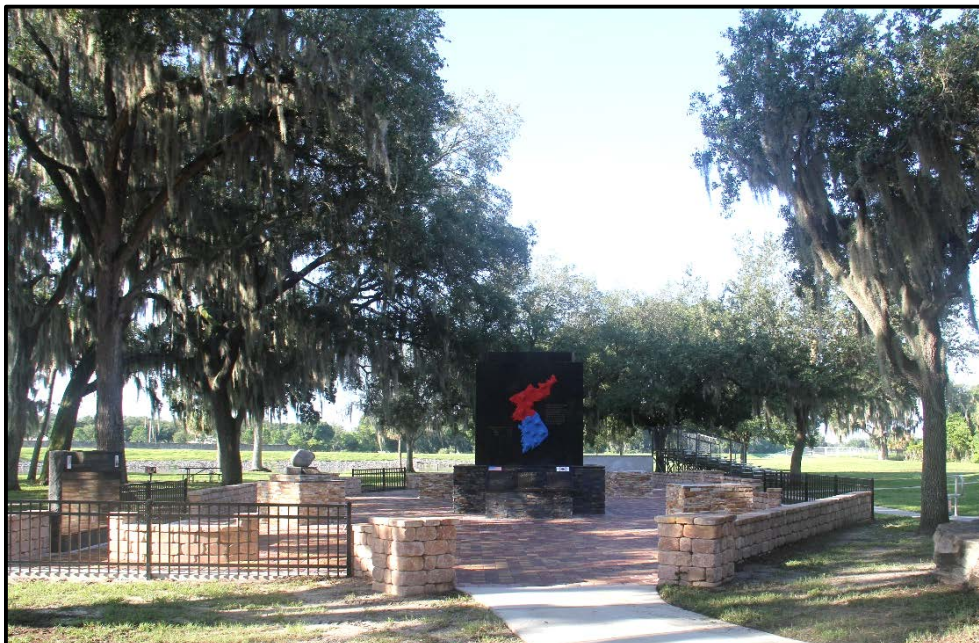


Figure 14 - KOREA
VETERANS MEMORIAL
The memorial sits nestled peacefully amongst the large oak trees

IRAQ WAR MEMORIAL – 2012 - 2014



Figure 15 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL – The striking first phase of the memorial includes one of a kind bronze and granite artwork.

Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn represent that portion of the war in the Middle East that occurred within the country of Iraq from 2003 to 2011 and are more commonly referred to together as the “Iraq War”. The dedication ceremony for the initial phase of the Iraq Veterans Memorial occurred on December 14th, 2013.

The memorial includes several unique and distinctive features in its serene location near the water and below the canopy of several large oak

Figure 16
IRAQ
VETERANS
MEMORIAL
A twelve foot
replica of a
concrete “T-
Wall” stands
and proudly
displays a
granite etched
mural based
upon a
rendering
provided by a
local artist.



NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

The various memorials are located to not disturb environmental resources on the property.

Landscaping utilized are drought tolerant native species

The addition of the memorials to the park, located next to the Tampa Bay Bypass Canal further enhances the green corridor along the canal.



Figure 17 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL - The dedication ceremony included the reading of names for all of the fallen from Hillsborough County. The names were read by Gold Star mothers who wore all white for the solemn occasion.

trees, the central feature includes a pedestal depicting the names of all 190 fallen heroes from the state of Florida. A bronze “battle cross” statue is located on top of the central pedestal. In addition to the black granite plaques depicting the names, the sides of the pedestal include a bronze logo for the memorial and three granite plaques. The laser etched granite plaques include artwork by local artist and soldier Tim Lawn with information identifying the total US casualties during the war and the Medal of Honor awardees.

The background for the pedestal is a replica of a concrete “T-Wall” that were commonly used during the engagement for security fencing. Attached to the twelve foot tall wall are etched black granite panels depicting a one of a kind artistic rendering provided by Mr. Lawn.

The bronze battle cross and bronze memorial emblems were provided by



Figure 18 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL - An intricate bronze “Battle Cross” resides on the center pedestal over the names of Florida’s fallen heroes.

Conceptual plans, landscape plans, site plans and a rendering were provided by Genesis as a pro bono contribution.

Structural designs for the pedestal and “T-Wall” were provided by Master Consulting Engineers, Inc. (MCE) from Tampa, FL.

All of the high quality black granite for this memorial was provided by Picture this on Granite from Vermont.

Figure 19 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL – The center pedestal includes the names of all of the fallen heroes from the state of Florida along with information regarding the total US casualties during the Iraq War.



Figure 20 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL
Genesis provided a hand rendering of the conceptual site plan for the ultimate build out to assist the committee in fundraising and visualization. Genesis went on to prepare engineering and landscape plans for the project.



The Genesis design for the memorial includes provisions to allow for the addition of decorative block 'seat' walls, metal fencing, landscape and irrigation, along with additional donor pavers and the display of two war era military vehicles that could be added when additional funding becomes available.



Figure 21- IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL - The back side of the "T-Wall" is adorned with granite plaques purchased by donors. Many of the memorials include the ability to provide special recognition to donors.

Figure 22 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL Custom bronze artwork was used to compliment the memorial.



Figure 23 - IRAQ VETERANS MEMORIAL – Many individuals and companies choose to purchase plaques for special honor and recognition of friends or family.

FALLEN HEROES MEMORIAL & FIELD OF HONOR (2013)

DEVELOPMENT /
INFRASTRUCTURE

The memorial designs include infrastructure adjustments and improvements to the overall park to provide better accessibility and allow for the addition of future memorials.

The park Master Plan, constructed by Hillsborough County, also includes provisions for a new museum building.



Figure 24 - FALLEN HEROES MEMORIAL – ‘Freedom is Not Free’ attached to the wall of the memorial are words that solemnly echo through the Veterans Park.

Since 2009 Hillsborough County has sought to honor the families of the fallen

heroes killed in the line of duty in support of operations related to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. One of the methods included engraving names on a set of plaques in Joe Chillura Courthouse Square Park in downtown Tampa, another included a ceremony at the Veterans



Figure 25 - FALLEN HEROES MEMORIAL - The names of the fallen from the "War on Terror" includes soldiers who lost their lives in the line of service in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

park that included the reading of names and the placement of a miniature American flag in honor of each life lost in service of their country in the previous 90 days.

As part of the memorial construction projects at the Veterans Park a new memorial was created in 2013 that combined these two honors into one permanent location at the park.

The memorial consists of a granite panel with the engraved names of the fallen. A wall behind the panels includes the words “Freedom Is Not Free”. During special events flags are added on both sides of the wall to complete the memorial.

The memorial was recreated in the park by Hillsborough County utilizing county staff for the design and construction.



Figure 26 – **FALLEN HEROES MEMORIAL** – During the 2013 dedication ceremony family members and friends of the fallen placed miniature American flags in the ground as a small means of remembrance and respect.



Figure 27 - **FALLEN HEROES MEMORIAL** - During special events flags are added into pre-installed flag stands around the memorial

SPANISH AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL (2014)

The Spanish American War memorial provides a history lesson of the 1898 war and the events preceding it. The memorial includes sixteen black granite plaques describing the timeline of events and a podium marking the memorial.

The Tampa Bay region's contributions to the war effort as the primary staging and supply port is one of historical significance to the history of our community. Many of the soldiers who participated in the war settled in the Tampa Bay region after the war was over. The first US Volunteer Cavalry unit was formed in Tampa as part of the preparation for the war, this unit later became known as the "Rough Riders".

The concept, design and construction was provided by the Tampa Bay Rough Riders.

The granite for the memorial provided by Picture This on Granite.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Several of the memorials include timelines and historical information to educate visitors about the specifics and need for the memorials.

The park Master Plan includes provisions for a new museum building. With the intent being that the memorials will generate public interest in the park that will help obtain the necessary funding for the new museum.

The long term intent of the park is to create a place of honor, remembrance and education.



Figure 28 - SPANISH AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL several of the memorials will include timelines or historical information to provide public education



Figure 29 - SPANISH AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL – A central podium includes references to the "Rough Riders", the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry Regiment; formed as a result of the war.

COMMITTED FORCES MEMORIAL (2014)

With Phase 1 dedicated in March 2014, the Committed Forces Memorial honors all the brave men and women who valiantly served in military conflicts, police actions and skirmishes around the world during peace time. The memorial includes a gray granite pedestal and black granite laser etched plaque for each of the over twenty five highlighted events. The plaques include a historical summary of the event. The central pedestal includes a dedication plaque and is topped with a bronze globe.



Figure 30 - COMMITTED FORCES MEMORIAL - Honoring the Veterans by reminding visitors of other military actions is one of the objectives of this memorial.

GOING GREEN

The park emphasizes incorporation of the memorials into the natural park like setting.

The memorials utilize little to no electricity and are largely composed of sustainable "green" resources.

Construction of the foundations and sidewalks for the memorial were provided by County work crews to cut construction costs and allow more of the available funds to be used for the memorial plaques.



Figure 31 - COMMITTED FORCES MEMORIAL – Black granite plaques on gray solid granite pedestals summarize the historical events represented by the memorial. The dedication ceremony included summaries of some of these events by soldiers who were present.



Figure 32 (Above)

COMMITTED FORCES MEMORIAL

The center pedestal includes a dedication plaque and a handmade bronze globe on a concrete pedestal.

Figure 33 (Right)

COMMITTED FORCES MEMORIAL

This memorial is nestled into a quiet corner of the park near the park entrance. The layout was modified to avoid existing trees and other site features.



The memorial was conceptualized and designed by Veteran Bob Silmsen.

All of the granite for this memorial was provided, shipped and installed by Picture This on Granite from Vermont.

The Bronze globe was provided by Betz Art Foundry.

The memorial design includes provisions for future phases of this memorial to allow for the addition of custom bronze sculptures representing historical soldiers from the branches of the US military service along with commemorative plaques for future occurrences when deemed necessary by the committee.

SUMMARY

The creation of the first six memorials at the Hillsborough County Veterans Park and Museum along with the plans for the next five was truly a community effort, led by a well-organized group of local veterans who worked tirelessly to achieve the group vision for each of these memorials. This united and dedicated effort created a moving and fitting tribute to those whose sacrifices have long deserved to be recognized, honored and memorialized.

*Genesis Project Manager Kyle L. Thornton, P.E. said, "This is a unique project for us on many levels. Like many others involved in these projects, we have been volunteering time and resources to help bring the veterans' visions for their memorials to reality. We worked with the various memorial sub committees to help develop and/or refine their concepts. **Each memorial is unique** because they reflect the vision and sentiment of the individual war veterans group members."*

Through this process, the park experienced a **major revitalization** as a result of these efforts. Once an unknown park which received few visitors, it has been elevated to one that pays homage to all veterans and receives many grateful visitors. It provides a serene setting for reflection and tribute to our brave military and their role in the history of our

Country. In addition, it has evolved into a **cultural site** showcasing the talented works of many veterans and artisans. The use of individual memorials allows the memorials to be spaced around the park to **preserve the natural environment** of the park and the use of **green building** principles helps blend the memorials with the environment. Each memorial dedication has grown in the number of attendees as veterans and their families, civic leaders and groups become aware of the park. The park creates an environment in which the general public becomes **educated** of the importance to remember and honor those who served. It is important to continue to increase the publicity of the park so that the contributions of the few are not forgotten by the many.

Genesis is proud to be associated with this project and enjoys the privilege of donating many of our professional services in honor and respect for those who defend our freedom.



Figure 34 – This solid granite pedestal, installed as part of the park infrastructure expansion, is topped by a bronze American Eagle and greets visitors to the park at the main entrance.

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*IRS Registered Non-Profit 501
(c)(3) EIN: 27-2568178*

FL Corporation: N10000009632

*FL Consumer Certificate of
Exemption: 85-8015546430C-1*

*FL Department of Agriculture &
Consumer Services
Registration: CH37713*



Figure 35 – The entry to the park was constructed by Hillsborough County as part of the 2009 construction of the park master plan.



Figure 36 - The Freedom Memorial was one of the first memorials located on the park grounds and was added to the original park in 1999.