

# Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park

## Guide Information and Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering to greet our visitors!

If you were provided with a t-shirt and/or name badge, please wear them.

If you have any questions or suggestions contact Randy Musser at 814-233-0351 or [info@patriotparkfoundation.org](mailto:info@patriotparkfoundation.org) or Clair Gill at 571-527-9737

You are not expected to memorize the following facts. They are just guidelines to help you know more about the memorial, Patriot Park Foundation and its mission, and to feel more comfortable interacting with the visitors. The more you read this information, and the more you volunteer, the easier it will get. Before volunteering, be sure to view our website at [www.patriotparkfoundation.org](http://www.patriotparkfoundation.org), and like and follow our social media page on Facebook.

### Some Do's and Don'ts:

When a person or group is approaching the plaza, please **DO greet them warmly, provide a brochure**, and thank them for stopping.

**DO FIRST explain the meaning of each flag**, one for each fallen member of our U.S. Armed Forces who served AFTER 9/11. Over 7,000 lives have been lost.

**DO be ready and approachable** for questions; **DON'T crowd them** or follow them. Many visitors like moments to observe and reflect.

**DO give some distance but watch discretely** to see if they look like they look like they have a question. (For example: if they appear to be looking around for a restroom or pamphlets)

If there are folks in the plaza, **DO be accessible** and ready for questions; **DON'T look down at a book or device**, if possible.

**DO offer to answer questions** and point out the brochures.

**DO encourage them to look at the names of the fallen.**

**DO remain open-minded** and take cues from the visitors. Some will be talkative while others won't want to engage.

If you see a group assembling for a photo, **DO offer to take the photo** for them, so the entire group can be in the photo.

**DO use an icebreaker like asking where they are from.** A good way to justify this is to say that we have visitors from all over the country, and we always ask.

**DO invite them to sign the guest registration book; DON'T solicit donations.** If, and only if, they ask first, you may point out the donation box and the QR code on some storyboards and the brochures. Information about mailing donations is in the brochures. Checks payable to Patriot Park Foundation should be mailed to **6150 Lincoln Highway, Stoystown, PA 15563.**

**DO inform them that we are a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization**, and all donations are 100% tax deductible and go toward developing the memorial.

**DO thank them for visiting** before they leave and if appropriate, invite them to view our website and social media pages on **Facebook and Instagram.**

**DO be supportive of the Flight 93 National Memorial. DON'T criticize its design** or suggest that the old (temporary) memorial was better.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### **When did the Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park open?**

- ★ September of 2021

### **Are you part of the Flight 93 National Memorial?**

- ★ No. This memorial is not operated by the National Park Service, but it is located within the legislative boundary of the Flight 93 National Memorial.
- ★ We believe that the placement of the Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park is important, because **the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) started over this ground**. Flight 93 passed over here moments before it crashed.
- ★ Patriot Park Foundation supports this memorial, and it is a private non-profit 501(c)3 corporation relying on the generous support of donors.
- ★ We receive NO federal financial support or funding.

### **Why is this memorial important?**

- ★ The passengers of Flight 93 were the first combatants in the GWOT. They voluntarily took action to protect America. Tens of thousands of young men and women joined the military and fought in the GWOT. Sadly, over 7000 never made it home. Many who did make it home struggle with physical and emotional wounds, some severe PTSD. We honor them all.
- ★ The Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park is dedicated to honoring the veterans of the GWOT, remembering the fallen and honoring those who served in the GWOT.

### **Where is the building on your website?**

- ★ The photo on the website is a conceptual design. The visitor center/museum and a permanent names of the fallen display are part of our future plans. Our dedicated volunteer board members have been raising awareness about this memorial and raising necessary funds for development and improvements.
- ★ The land on which this memorial sits was donated by two families. Initially, 10 acres were donated by one family, and later another family donated 7 additional acres. All funds to develop and operate this memorial are privately donated. No government funding is provided.

### **What is going on with all of these flags?**

- ★ The Field of Heroes is here to remind us of the ultimate sacrifice made by those who never returned home from the GWOT. Each flag represents one soldier who gave his or her life. It is a visual representation of the cost of freedom.

### **How long did it take to put in all those flags?**

- ★ For the first few seasons, all 7000+ flags were manually planted and then removed. Volunteer engineers would come in ahead of time to set perimeters, and then depending on weather and how many volunteers, it would take 3-5 days to drill holes in the hard ground and set the flags.
- ★ We now have a permanent flag holder system consisting of rebar and tubing that simplifies this process. Any broken or damaged flags are disposed of properly during a closing ceremony where they are burned and Taps is played. Flags in good condition will be carefully dried and stored for reuse.
- ★ Many local high school students from several area schools volunteer to place the flags in the spring and retire them in the fall.

**My family member served in \_\_\_\_\_, and died. Could I place a flag in their honor?**

- ★ Our casualty count information comes from the United State Defense Casualty Analysis System. Be assured your loved one is represented here in our Field of Heroes. (Please express your appreciation for the family member's service and express appropriate condolences.) Check the Names of the Fallen Book to find their loved one.

**How long have you been working here?**

- ★ None of us are paid employees. We are all volunteers, and I have been helping for \_\_\_\_\_.

**Will there be more storyboards installed? Who determines what is on the storyboards?**

- ★ The Board of Directors for Patriot Park Foundation decides on topics for the storyboards.
- ★ We've had local high school students involved in writing stories for some other boards.
- ★ The storyboards are periodically rotated in and out of service or retired at the discretion of the board.

**What was this site before the memorial was built?**

- ★ The land on which the Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park is built is a reclaimed surface mine, just like the land in the Flight 93 National Memorial.
- ★ It had a large underground mining operation during WWI and a surface mine operation during WWII, both providing coal for the war efforts. In the 1990's the land was remined to remove all remaining coal and then reclaimed with grass and trees. The Field of Heroes area was not planted in trees, because the property owner wanted to make it into a baseball field.

**How can someone help with the memorial?**

- ★ We welcome volunteers to help with maintenance and various committees. **There are ways to get involved no matter what your skills and experience may be.**
- ★ We are seeking folks with landscape architecture experience to serve on a design committee to create a conceptual design for the future permanent displays.
- ★ We especially encourage veterans and Gold Star Family members to get involved.
- ★ Contact Randy Musser at 814-233-0351 for details.

# Post-9/11 U.S. Armed Forces Memorial at Patriot Park

## Fact Sheet

### MISSION:

The mission of the Patriot Park Foundation is to remember and honor our Post 9-11 United States Armed Forces and their families for their sacrifices to preserve and protect our freedom; Through monuments, displays, and learning opportunities, Patriot Park Foundation will inspire patriotism in all who visit.

### CORE VALUES:

- ★ **Remember** – Remember those who died in the Global War on Terrorism.
- ★ **Honor** – Honor all those who served and their families.
- ★ **Inspire** – Inspire patriotism through stories and military displays.

### LOCATION:

- ★ The location of the memorial is significant, because it is across the highway from The Flight 93 National Memorial and beneath the skies where 40 brave men and women fought back against terrorism on September 11, 2001. Many who later fought in the GWOT may have been inspired by those 40 and followed in their footsteps over the past 20 years.
- ★ The memorial is, in fact, located within the legislative boundary of the Flight 93 National Memorial, but it is not operated by the National Park Service and receives no government funding.

### ADDITIONAL FACTS:

- ★ Our goal is to honor the service members' families who have made great sacrifices to support their loved ones during their commitment to defend our freedoms.
- ★ We intend to use facilities at the memorial to partner with other organizations that serve the needs of combat veterans who have returned home, including the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. According to the US Department of Veterans Affairs, veteran suicide is a devastating problem. Patriot Park Foundation is committed to partner with agencies that provide mental health services to veterans.
- ★ Patriot Park Foundation is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization.
- ★ The website is [www.patriotparkfoundation.org](http://www.patriotparkfoundation.org), Facebook: Patriot Park
- ★ The memorial officially opened on September 3, 2021, with a dedication ceremony that was attended by many local officials, management personnel of the Flight 93 National Memorial, members of the Shanksville Volunteer Fire Department, and other supporters.
- ★ On display during opening weekend were the Remembering Our Fallen Traveling Memorial and the Global War on Terrorism History Project. Students from local Shanksville-Stonycreek, North Star, and Shade Central-City School Districts assisted with set-up and removal of the traveling memorials.
- ★ Local school districts assist with placement of the flags each spring.
- ★ In November of 2022, Davis Schmucker of Washington, D.C., graciously donated 7 additional acres of property adjacent to the memorial site, increasing the total footprint to 17 acres.

- ★ Development of the memorial has been broken down into phases. We have accomplished many things since the Groundbreaking Ceremony in 2021, including: Site development, paved parking constructed, walkways installed, gazebo installed, permanent flag holders installed, electric service and uplighting installed, removal of old building and storage shed placed, welcome cabin with porch installed, improved road signage placed, expansion of space for storyboards and new storyboards created, designated bus parking developed, and more.
- ★ In 2024, the memorial was designated as a Blue Star Byway Marker and a Gold Star Memorial Marker.
- ★ Future plans include constructing a permanent display of the names of the fallen, a museum/visitor center, a hard surface walkway, and increased parking.