

A History of the Monuments & Memorials in the Wesley Bolin Plaza
at the Arizona State Capitol

by

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ABSTRACT

The Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza is located across the street from the state capitol building in Phoenix, Arizona. Here, pieces of Arizona's history are commemorated through monuments and memorials. Monuments and memorials reflect how people have conceived their collective identity, especially when those choices are made in public spaces. The markers in the Wesley Bolin Plaza reflect the changing identity of Arizonans, both locally and in connection to national identity. Over time, they have become crucial to shaping the landscape and the historical memory of the city, state, or country. Of note, the memorials on the Arizona State Capitol grounds are unique in how they are placed all together in a park directly across the street. In 1976, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza emerged through a conversation with broader currents in the region's and nation's history. Over time, the plaza has become a sacred space because so many of its memorials include relics and artifacts, or list the names of those who have lost their lives in their service to Arizona. In these ways the plaza became a landscape of memory where visitors come to remember and honor those people and parts of Arizona history. The memorial plaza also influences Arizonans' knowledge of history. It engenders a local as well as a national loyalty and identity in its citizens and visitors. By researching the history of several of the prominent monuments and memorials in the plaza, I discovered a rich history and an intriguing story behind each one that is built. Most monuments and memorials are commemorating complex events or people in history, yet have only short inscriptions on them. As a result, much of the historical narrative, complexities, and symbolism can be lost. My purpose is to tell the story of the plaza, these memorials, and their history; highlighting their significance to Arizonans and

explaining how the monuments and memorials fit into the larger story of historical commemoration.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: ARIZONA'S HISTORY COMMEMORATED

In the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza, across the street from the state capitol building in Phoenix Arizona, pieces of the state's history are commemorated through over forty monuments and memorials. Arizona is unique among other state capitols in that it has established a designated space that tells a narrative of the state's history in a single park located across from its capitol building. As a visitor to the plaza one might observe, due to the lack of people around, that this treasure trove of history has long been forgotten, or is completely unknown to many Arizona citizens. While many in Arizona may be unaware of its presence, in my research I realized that for many people in this state, it is a significant place that carries great meaning. At times, it even becomes a sacred space for visitors who come to commemorate a particular event in Arizona's history, or to honor the memory of lost loved ones. Although the plaza does not commemorate one specific religion, it has become a sacred space because of the reverential quality it produces by being a place that honors the dead and connects the living to them in a shared community.

The Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza has changed and developed over the years. It has turned into a place that influences national and local identity. It has become an almost sanctified space because so many of its memorials include relics and artifacts, or list the names of those who have lost their lives in their service to Arizona. In these ways the plaza is now a landscape of memory where visitors come to learn about and remember those people and parts of Arizona history. My purpose is to tell the story of the plaza, these memorials, and their history; highlighting their importance to Arizonans and

explaining how the monuments and memorials fit into the larger story of historical commemoration.

Monument Theory

Monuments and memorials are physical places established to remember important people and events in a community or nation's history. While some memorials or monuments are built to commemorate the past, others serve a different purpose, such as to extend healing or to create a sense of unity. Scholars, politicians, and communities have varied views in regards to the importance of having a physical place of commemoration.

There are several different categories of scholarship surrounding monuments and memorials that I draw my research from. Kirk Savage, arguably the leading historian studying monuments, sets forth a guide on how to analyze and write about monuments, monumental landscapes, and their impact in *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*.¹ In revealing the historical process through which the U.S. Congress created the National Mall over two centuries, Savage provides a model on how to explore a focused memorial space, such as the Bolin plaza. In his work, scholar James Loewen takes a more general look at monuments and memorials across the United States. With his book, he takes a unique approach of pointing out the flaws in the historical record across the landscape and explaining how that influences visitors' knowledge and perceptions of history.² Using his

¹ Kirk Savage. *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*, (2011).

² James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*, (New York: Touchstone / Simon & Schuster, 2000).

examples, I take a critical look at the monuments in the Wesley Bolin Plaza as I look for the history that is being recounted there, whether it is historically accurate, or look for what is being left out of the narrative of the landscape. Erika Doss's *Memorial Mania* updates our understanding of monuments to consider those more recently created. She argues that "memorials are archives of public affect, 'repositories of feelings and emotions' that are embodied in their material form and narrative content."³ In her book she goes through examples of memorials highlighting the different emotions that lead communities to memorialize certain events. Many of the memorials in the Wesley Bolin Plaza were built based on the various heightened emotions she discusses. Doss even refers to the 9/11 memorial in the Phoenix plaza as one of her examples of a memorial that sparked anger following its erection. Emotions play a crucial role in the process of memorialization.

Scholarship regarding particular memorials, such as the Vietnam Veterans Wall, provide guidance on thinking about this process of memorialization—especially as it has transformed in recent years. The Wall was revolutionary among memorials and forever changed how communities built and viewed memorials.⁴ Historians Kristin Hass and Patrick Hagopian both write about the influence of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in American memory and how memorials became a place to commemorate tragedy as well as triumph, turning them into places of sacredness and healing.⁵ Though most of the

³ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*. (Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press; 2012); 14.

⁴ Kristin Ann Hass, *Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁵ Patrick Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory Veterans, Memorials, and the Politics of Healing*. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

written scholarship surrounds the Vietnam Veterans Memorial or just monuments in general, there are some historians who have looked at other types of specific memorials. For example, historian Cynthia Prescott is writing a book all about Pioneer Memorials, offering a unique perspective and history of this one distinct type of memorial. In her book, she looks at the pioneer monument in the Wesley Bolin Plaza and how it fits into the larger national narrative of pioneer and settler memorials. A final category of scholarship I used in studying monumental theory is the work of scholars such as J.B. Jackson and Lubar and Kendrick who write about relics and artifacts and the role they play and how these items influence historic sites of memory. Relics and artifacts are often used in the memorials located in the Wesley Bolin plaza to provide the visitors with a sense of connection, creating an almost sacred landscape of history and memorialization.

Some monuments in the plaza are more well-known than others, while others have caused considerable controversy over their design, purpose, or building, and as a result have received much more attention among historical scholarship. However, as a whole, there has not been much written about the specific memorials here at the State Capitol in Arizona. These particular memorials offer the public a glimpse into crucial aspects of history and symbolism that are important to Arizona and its community. This is an important topic because time has proven that monuments and memorials help people remember the past. This is evidenced by the fact that events that do not get a place on the landscape are often largely overlooked or forgotten to history. In his book, *Lies Across America*, historian James Loewen argues for the importance of these historical landmarks, stating that a good deal of the history Americans learn about their past comes from the landscape, and specifically from the history recounted on monuments and

memorials.⁶ This plaza is also significant in that it is a way that Arizona has asserted its relevance in the historical record by taking its local identity and attaching and connecting it into the larger national narrative.

Monuments and memorials serve the public by giving them a space that they can come to learn more about history, and to remember people and events. “Memorials are not simply the products of their designers’ imaginations and their planners’ motives,” scholar Patrick Hagopian explains, “as visitors enrich the site with their own thoughts and feelings, a memorial becomes a public possession.”⁷ The public plays a large role in the importance and relevance of memorials because they are the ones who choose what will be memorialized and the ones who continue to visit after it is built. The monuments and memorials at the State Capitol are the product of private organizations’ donations or public fundraising to raise money to erect them.

There is such a rich history and intriguing story behind each monument and memorial that gets built, but unfortunately, this history is often largely unknown to the public who walk the grounds viewing them. Most monuments and memorials are commemorating complex events or people in history, yet have only short inscriptions on them. As a result, much of the historical narrative, complexities, and symbolism can be lost to the public if they do not have a prior knowledge of the historical event. The memorials are still important in shaping public memory; but, additional understanding and interpretations of monuments and memorials is helpful and necessary to grasp the full story.

⁶ Loewen, *Lies Across America*, 16.

⁷ Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory*, 348.

Monuments and memorials are a crucial part of shaping the landscape and the historical memory of the city, state, or country in which they are built. “A traditional monument,” historian J. B. Jackson explains, “is an object which is supposed to remind us of something important.”⁸ While they do serve this purpose, these historic sites can also change how others view the past, which makes it all the more crucial to recognize that the interpretations placed on the markers are not always correct. Groups or individuals with a specific agenda can build a monument that, instead of reflecting the historical event accurately, represents the feelings of the current time period in which it was erected. Thus, revising monuments and memorials or providing the space with further interpretation is sometimes necessary as a correction when only partial or untrue histories are recounted.

The full history behind each monument consists of so much more than is often shown on the landscape because there are several different eras that influence a monument. Monuments can often be extremely biased depending on who erected them and for what reason. Something that often goes unrealized, but is absolutely imperative that visitors understand as they view monuments and memorials is that they have two histories. “Every historic site tells two different stories about two different eras in the past,” Loewen points out. “One is its manifest narrative – the event or person heralded in its text or artwork. The other is the story of its erection or preservation.” Therefore, “the images on our monuments and language on our markers reflect the attitudes and ideas of the time when Americans put them up,” which does not always accurately portray the

⁸ J.B. Jackson, "The Necessity for Ruins," in *The Necessity for Ruins and Other Topics*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980); 91.

real or complete history.⁹ This is key to recognize when studying monuments and memorials, and is vital for the public to understand this so they can gain a more complete understanding and appropriate interpretation when they visit these sites.

In her book *Memorial Mania*, historian Erika Doss writes that, “Marking social and political interests and claiming particular historical narratives, memorials can possess enormous power and influence.”¹⁰ Because many memorials have proved over and over again to have significant power and influence over the public, the building of memorials, or their wording and design, can at times be extremely controversial. Loewen reiterates this by pointing out how “dominant groups use their power to erect historic markers and monuments that present history from their viewpoint.” It is necessary to realize who is making the choices of what gets commemorated on the historical landscape because, “who controls the present controls the landscape, [and] who controls the landscape controls the future.”¹¹ Monuments are built for the future. They are built by those who want history to be remembered in a certain way in the years to come.¹² Studying monuments and memorials in a more critical way, and analyzing when and who decided to memorialize an event, can give the public a broader understanding of what has and is taking place. Acknowledging both eras of a monument’s history together can tell the visitor a lot about what was going on at the time, as well as what was important that these groups, who built them, wanted remembered and physically memorialized. By doing this, one gains a greater understanding of the history of the memorial; however, without

⁹ Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*, 44.

¹⁰ Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 9.

¹¹ Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*, 260.

¹² Jackson, "The Necessity for Ruins," 93.

further interpretation beyond the monuments themselves, the information regarding the second era, the construction of the monument, often goes unknown to the general public.

Additional interpretation to monuments and memorials can give added meaning and greater understanding to the events being memorialized. Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza needs something more in regards to interpretation and the way the information is given so that visitors can dive deeper into the rich history that is housed there. One way to accomplish this would be to provide audio for visitors to listen to or further information to read about each monument and memorial as they walk the grounds. This would also serve to assist teachers each year with their students as they take their students on a tour learning more about Arizona history through studying the history of the State Capitol and Arizona's monuments and memorials.

A History of the State Capitol Building

Understanding the story of the emergence of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza requires first looking at the history of the State Capitol which stands across the street. Construction of the territorial capitol building in Phoenix began in 1899. The *Arizona Republic* reported, "Act No. 9 of the Nineteenth legislature, approved March 8, 1897, provided for the erection of a capitol building at Phoenix and authorized the issue of \$100,000 of five per cent territorial bonds for the purpose."¹³ The Capitol Site Commission chose architect James Riely Gordon's design for the building. Gordon pointed out that his design made it possible for additions to the building to be constructed without destroying any of the original work. He said "When the territory becomes a state

¹³ "The Capitol Baptized," *Arizona Republic*, February 26, 1901.

and the wings are added to the building it will be a state house which the people will have reason to be proud of.”¹⁴ This foresight to construct the building so that it would be ready for growth reflected state leaders’ ambitions toward soon becoming a state. Historian Jay Price described how the new buildings’ architecture reflected territorial aspirations, “Arizona was telling the world that it embraced the ideals and views of the rest of the country and that it was ready for statehood.” The building embodied the state’s identity, as it was constructed of materials drawn from across the region. According to Price, “the foundation was made of malpai, the walls of the first story of granite, and the rest of the walls of tufa.”¹⁵ The landscape surrounding the Capitol building featured large lawns, ponds and reflecting pools, as well as many trees and other shrubbery. The construction was completed and the building was turned over to the Capitol Commission on August 4th, 1900. Though the commission originally had a goal to keep the cost of the building’s construction to \$100,000, the total cost ballooned to \$135,744.¹⁶

After the territorial officials moved into their offices at the new capitol building, a dedication ceremony was held on February 25th, 1901, which was also the 38th anniversary of the Territory of Arizona. People came by train from all across the territory to attend the grand celebration. Following a large parade, Governor Murphy spoke of the history of the Territory of Arizona. The governor said of the new building, “It is a fitting

¹⁴ Michael D. Carman, *Under the Copper Dome: The Arizona Capitol, 1898-1974*. Phoenix, Ariz.: Museum Division of Arizona State Library, Archives & Public Records, 2001, 13.

¹⁵ Jay M. Price, "CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS: Style and Image in Arizona's and New Mexico's Public Architecture." *The Journal of Arizona History* 41, no. 4 (2000): 358, <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/stable/41696605>

¹⁶ Carman, *Under the Copper Dome*, 24.

monument to the vigor, courage and patriotism of this young commonwealth. It would do credit to any state in this union, and we are all justly proud of it.”¹⁷

However, the Capitol building quickly became overcrowded after Arizona became a state in 1912 and it was obvious that additions were already needed. The first addition to the capitol was constructed from 1918-1919 on the west side of the building in what would begin to form a sort of “H” shape. In the 1930s, overcrowding in the Capitol building was again an issue and another addition was made in 1938-1939. This addition completed the previously planned “H” shape on the west side and included air conditioning being placed in the building. The total additions expanded the Capitol building from 40,800 square feet of floor space in 1900, to 64,000 in 1919, and finally, 123,000 square feet total in 1939.¹⁸ These additions provided a temporary solution for the state but in the years to come, space would start to be an issue once again.

The State Capitol building itself and the surrounding grounds began to create a landscape of state identity. When the Capitol building was first built, it was surrounded by a park with many beautiful plants and trees. Throughout the years, various horticultural endeavors were attempted on the capitol grounds. Many different kinds of trees and plants were planted on this Arizona desert landscape. Beautiful ponds and grass surrounded the Capitol building, the head of Arizona’s government. The Capitol building was made completely from local Arizona materials, showcasing the beauty and abundance of resources available in the state and the community’s pride in the fact that their state had many useful resources. The Capitol building itself, as well as the grounds,

¹⁷ “The Capitol Baptized,” *Arizona Republic*, February 26, 1901.

¹⁸ Carman, *Under the Copper Dome*, 30-32.

was the first piece of the creation of a monumental place, because it was a monument—through materials and symbols—to state identity. Like other capitol buildings it is about shaping state identity, and its grounds would continue to do this. Monuments and memorials to people and events that had merit in Arizona history first began to be placed in various locations in front of and around the grounds of the Capitol building. It wouldn't be until 1974 that a site was commissioned to be built as a memorial plaza, to create a space specifically designed to house these monuments and memorials.

Frank Luke Memorial

The first memorial to be erected on the state capitol grounds was a memorial built in 1930 to Frank Luke Jr. The Frank Luke Jr. Memorial was sponsored by the State of Arizona and approved by the ninth legislative assembly for a cost of \$10,000. The Frank Luke Jr. Memorial Committee enlisted the help of the Gold Star Mothers of Arizona to compile a complete and accurate list of all the young men from Arizona who lost their lives in the World War. The Gold Star Mothers organization was formed in 1928 by a group of women in Washington D.C. who had lost their sons in World War I. These women formed a “nondenominational, non-profitable and nonpolitical organization” of mothers who found solace through honoring their children, assisting the veterans, supporting the nation, and healing together. ¹⁹ Only a few years after the organization's formation, they worked to erect memorials to their fallen sons. Though it was a national organization, there were local chapters as well. The group of Arizona Gold

¹⁹ “History,” *American Gold Star Mothers Inc.*
<https://web.archive.org/web/20160816201358/http://www.goldstarmoms.com/About/History.htm> Accessed March 26th, 2019.

Star Mothers assisted the memorial committee by providing the names of the 318 Arizonans who died in the war. The committee then listed these names on the granite memorial placed on the front lawn of the state capitol grounds. In some ways, the Frank Luke Memorial is not only a memorial to Luke, but a comprehensive World War I memorial commemorating all those Arizonans who gave their lives in the war, as well as a memorial to their mothers.

On top of the granite portion with the inscribed names, the memorial has a bronze statue of Lieutenant Frank Luke Jr., known as the “ace of aces,” a young Arizona fighter pilot who died in the war.²⁰ Born in Phoenix, Luke died when he was only 21 years old. He received several awards and medals, among them the Congressional Medal of Honor, and he was the only aviator in the first World War to do so. Noted sculptor Roger Burnham, who would gain notoriety for his work in Los Angeles, designed the full-length statue of Luke, dressed in his military uniform and holding an aviator helmet at his side. The memorial was erected at the entrance to the state capitol grounds and the unveiling of the statue and dedication ceremony took place on Armistice day, November 11th, 1930. Frank Luke’s niece and two nephews unveiled the statue. Thousands gathered for the ceremony and Governor John Phillips spoke at the dedication.

²⁰ “Frank Luke Memorial to Bear Names of Arizona’s War Dead,” *Arizona Republic*, July 8, 1930.



Figure 1: Frank Luke Memorial Dedication Newspaper Clipping, "State Pays Tribute to World War Heroes," Arizona Republic, November 12, 1930

In his dedicatory speech, Governor Phillips spoke of the example of Frank Luke and his impact on the state of Arizona. "Lieut. Frank Luke Jr. brought to our state and to the nation distinction and honor," the governor stated, "we are proud to honor the memory of our native son by the erection of this monument which is built to endure. It will stand as an inspiration to the youth of today and tomorrow. The example of courage and patriotism set by this Phoenix boy should encourage them to do their best in every important undertaking of their lives so that when the big moment comes they may be prepared, as he was, to give their best for whatever worthy purpose it may be

needed...with reverence we dedicate this monument to the memory of Frank Luke Jr., hero of Arizona and of our country.”²¹ The wording of this speech shows how Arizona, still a relatively new and young state, now found a place for itself within the larger national narrative as it made a claim of its significance to the country through a hero that the state could honor, remember, and be proud of. The memorial was one of the first physical reminders to Arizona citizens of loyalty to their state as well as to the nation.

Luke remains iconic in the region, having been commemorated throughout the years in many ways, including through Luke Air Force Base which was built and named after him. In September 2018, on the one-hundred-year anniversary of Luke’s death, a special ceremony took place on the Capitol grounds to honor his memory. The State Capitol Museum also put together a special display to tell his story. This memorial statue continues to be a favorite of many Arizonans who come to visit the State Capitol grounds today. It was the first memorial that began to define the grounds of the capital as a memorial space. This memorial was the beginning of the development of Arizona’s unique monumental landscape.

The construction of the State Capitol building and the placing of monuments and memorials around its grounds marked the beginning of the state of Arizona creating a local identity for themselves. By using the persuasive power and influence of monuments and memorials, the state began to make a claim on the public space about Arizona’s role and rising importance to the nation, thus creating a place for themselves in the nation’s larger historic narrative.

²¹ “Arizona Honors War Dead,” *Arizona Republic*, November 12, 1930, 9-10.

CHAPTER 2

A MONUMENTAL SPACE EMERGES

Frank Luke was the first installment in the transformation of the Capitol and its grounds into distinctive monumental landscape, well before the emergence of the particular idea to build a Memorial Plaza. In fact, the grounds of the state capitol gradually became a site where communities and interest groups erected monuments important to them. To some degree, the choice of the state capitol grounds is not surprising. After all, the capitol is the site of public governance and authority, its location is quite visible, and claiming that space promised to be potent politically and culturally. Sitting alongside, older memorials, such as the World War I monument to Frank Luke Jr., which was cherished by the community, both lent an air of legitimacy and became a way for various groups to make a claim as to what the state's and nation's values were, or should be.

Other monuments and memorials in the plaza have become emotionally charged places of controversy or debate about state and national values and whether certain views belong on public grounds. Kirk Savage summed it up well when he wrote, "Monuments will be subject to dispute and change before and after they are built and the landscape of national memory will never cease to evolve."²² This chapter will look at three memorials that were placed on the State Capitol grounds before the idea of a plaza was conceived, some of which, at different times, have been the subject of considerable controversy. These three memorials are the Confederate Memorial, Ten Commandments Memorial,

²² Savage. *Monument Wars*, 22.

and the Pioneer Women Memorial. These three memorials reflect larger national trends of memorialization and tell Arizona's unique role and how it used these various means of commemoration.

Confederate Memorial

Just as monuments and memorials' meanings and purposes have shifted over time, so has the scholarship surrounding them. In recent years the controversial aspects of monuments have been a larger part of the historical discussion. One of the most recent books in the literature regarding monuments and memorials was published last year and is called *Controversial Monuments and Memorials*.²³ This book is evidence of the popularity of this topic and the way the historiography of this field seems to be moving towards studying and debates of whether historically inaccurate monuments should be taken down or revised.

Attending the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza as a chaperone for a fourth-grade class field trip, we walked through the plaza and the teacher pointed out every memorial to the school children, telling them a little bit about each. I was surprised that when the teacher turned to face the Confederate monument, he looked at it and then continued forward on the path without saying anything. One of the kids pointed to it and asked their teacher what it was but the teacher had already moved on, decidedly ignoring the Confederate monument with all its surrounding controversy. I found it interesting that he seemed to not want to engage at all with any discussion among his students, or their adult chaperones, about this highly debated monument.

²³ David B. Allison. *Controversial Monuments and Memorials: A Guide for Community Leaders* (2018).

In recent years, Confederate Memorials have emerged as contested historical sites, with frequent news coverage attending to the debate. Often portrayed as a simple argument between those opposed and those supportive, Confederate monuments have become touchstones of political and social disputes. That debate has reached Arizona's six Confederate monuments. However, the memorial to Confederate soldiers at the state capitol is perhaps the most public of them. It was erected in 1961 and dedicated in 1962, before the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza even existed; yet in the recent years, this monument has been at the center of Arizona's discussion over removal.

At Arizona's fiftieth anniversary celebration on February 14, 1962, the Confederate Monument was dedicated at the state capitol grounds. The Secretary of State, Wesley Bolin, attended and spoke at the ceremony. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, who donated the memorial the year before, came dressed in costumes of the 1860s.²⁴ The United Daughters of the Confederacy presented the memorial to the state, to commemorate Arizona's confederate soldiers. The memorial is made up of greenish rocks that are shaped into an outline of the state of Arizona with a plaque in the middle. On the bottom of the concrete base there are three pieces of petrified wood and another sign that reads, "A nation that forgets its past, has no future."

At the time of the Civil War, Arizona was only a territory and its involvement in the war was extremely limited. The Battle at Picacho Peak was the territory of Arizona's only Civil War battle. It consisted of a fight between a mere thirteen Union soldiers and ten Confederate soldiers. Three Union soldiers were killed, and though it is technically

²⁴ "State Plans Variety of Celebrations," *Arizona Republic*, February 13, 1962, 3.

considered a Confederate victory, both sides ended up retreating. There is a monument at the actual Picacho Peak battle site that commemorates the event. Some Arizonans are extremely proud of their history and a glorified Civil War re-enactment battle takes place at the site of the battle each year. In Arizona newspapers covering this topic of debate, some people interviewed argue that the monument at Picacho Peak is enough of a commemoration for this event and that it can remain, but say that the monuments built specifically to the Confederacy need to come down.

Tensions rose over the subject of Confederate monuments as activists across the nation called for their removal. In 2015, Representative Bolding in Arizona called for the monument in the Capitol to be removed and for the Jefferson Davis highway to be renamed so as not to commemorate the only president of the Confederacy.²⁵ However, no legislation was proposed to remove the Confederate monument. Some suggested as a possible compromise, that instead of removal, a memorial to Union soldiers be added to the plaza as well. But that idea never came to fruition in the legislature either.

Many different groups and individuals continued to call for the monument's removal. Arizona NAACP spokesperson Collette Watson argued that this monument was indeed intended as a statement against racial equality. She firmly stated, "We believe that these monuments have been erected to intimidate, terrorize and strike fear in the hearts of Arizonans, particularly African-Americans, while inspiring and emboldening white supremacists."²⁶ Because this monument was erected in the 1960s during the early civil

²⁵ Alia Beard Rau. "Should Arizona Dump its Confederate History?" *Arizona Republic*, May 28, 2017, 8.

²⁶ Montini and Ed. "Our Governor Cowers at the Echo of a Rebel Yell," *Arizona Republic*, Jun 11, 2017, 14.

rights movement, it was erected as a political statement against civil rights more than a way to commemorate the centennial of the Civil War and Confederate soldiers. Studying the history of the 1960s during the time period when it was erected, which is the second era of the monument, can provide visitors with a better understanding of the monument's context. The political culture at the time it was placed in the plaza tells a story less about commemorating the Civil War and more about groups during that time who were protesting racial equality.²⁷ Another argument among those who want these monuments removed is that while everyone has a right to their personal opinion and free expression, they argue that those personal views do not belong on a memorial placed on public state grounds.²⁸

Those who called for the removal of the Confederate monument at the state capitol grew increasingly frustrated with Governor Ducey's lack of action concerning the monument. But Governor Ducey's spokesperson claimed it was not in the governor's jurisdiction to decide regarding the monument's status. He said, "For something like the memorial at the Wesley Bolin plaza, that's overseen by the Legislative Governmental Mall Commission... Even though the request is directed at the governor, these issues really fall under the jurisdiction of other entities."²⁹ So ultimately when faced with this controversy, Governor Ducey's solution was an attempt to neatly sidestep any responsibility regarding the issue altogether. But that hasn't stopped the protests surrounding the monument at the state capitol. One woman wanted to make her own

²⁷ Montini and Ed. "Our Governor Cowers," 21.

²⁸ Montini and Ed. "Our Governor Cowers," 24-25.

²⁹ Montini and Ed. "Our Governor Cowers," 11.

personal stand against the monument and so she hung a 2nd place banner across the bottom of the monument in Wesley Bolin Plaza.³⁰ Another vandalized the monument by spray painting it white. People have continued to deface this monument and other Confederate monuments throughout the state and the nation, as a form of protest.

On the other side of the discussion are those that believe that these monuments are part of history and it would be erasing our past to remove them. Curt Tipton, a member of the Arizona division of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans has argued that these monuments are a crucial part of Arizona's history and that it would be "ridiculous" to take them down.³¹ Some in these groups claim that the memorial is simply to honor the memory of the soldiers who fought and nothing more. And others admit that while it may have been erected with some racial intent, the monument is now a part of the historic landscape and it would be erasing part of Arizona's heritage to remove it. But how can we justify keeping something on our public landscape, something that will mold our children's view of history, if it was erected with an exclusionary and racist intent? The argument that is has been part of Arizona's landscape and history so long that it would be erasing Arizona heritage to remove it, is still hotly debated today. Since it appears the monument will remain in the plaza for the time being, it is necessary to provide visitors with some further interpretation about the monument, including more context about its history and the controversy surrounding it. In this way, an open dialogue could be

³⁰ Antonia Noori Farzan, "Someone Turned the Confederate Memorial at the Capitol into a Second-Place Trophy and It's Amazing," *Phoenix New Times*, August 16, 2017, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/activist-turns-confederate-memorial-at-arizona-capitol-into-participation-trophy-9596953>.

³¹ Rau. "Should Arizona Dump its Confederate History?" 16.

facilitated on the historical landscape that would hopefully foster more understanding of the history and heightened emotions regarding this monument.

The Confederate monument still stands in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza today and continues to be an item of sharp criticism and debate. It stands today as evidence that a memorial has so much more to its history than merely what it is claiming to memorialize. The era in which it was built, and who built it, tell us the larger story of what was going on at that time, and can truly change the entire meaning of the memorial. Visitors must view memorials critically, to question who built them, why and when instead of just taking them and what they say at face value. There is so much more to their history that goes deeper than just what the viewer can see. And we must ask, is memorializing only one glorified version of the historical narrative an acceptable practice or accurate representation of local and national history? It is most definitely not.

Ten Commandments Memorial

The Ten Commandments Memorial is another memorial in the plaza, and across the nation, that went generally unnoticed, at least in the public dialogue, until recent years when activists began to question whether it was fair or right to only have one religion's viewpoint commemorated on the landscape. All across the country in the early 2000s, stories of these monuments began to gain traction in the national news. A heated debate revolved around several new Ten Commandment Memorials being built, while others that had been around for years, similar to the one in Phoenix, were torn down or defaced.

In 1964, the Fraternal Order of Eagles (FOE) presented the memorial to the state of Arizona as part of a larger national trend. Local lodge 2407 donated the memorial to the community, to be placed on the public state capitol grounds. The monument itself

consists of a granite slab in the shape of the Ten Commandments tablets with the commandments listed on them. The monument also features an engraving of an eagle flying over an American flag below the image of a pyramid with the all-seeing eye. The national Eagles club purchased these monuments at a cost of about \$500 a piece and donated them to states all across the nation in an attempt to “bring back the Ten Commandments to the people.”³² The state’s local chapters of the Fraternal Order of the Eagles then placed them in public places throughout the states. These monuments, now featured all across the nation, look almost completely identical to one another. The erection and donation of these monuments was part of a larger national marketing move to promote Cecil DeMille’s Ten Commandments movie. DeMille was the one to suggest to the FOE that they make and distribute these monuments throughout the country after realizing this was an opportunity to advertise his movie on a much larger and very physical scale.³³

In the 60s, countless monuments of this same type were placed all across the state and nation and it appears no one objected to their being placed there at the time. This was due in part to a larger national movement during the Cold War era of an increase of Christian ideals being portrayed in the public sphere. At the dedication ceremony of the Ten Commandments Memorial at the Arizona State Capitol, Jewish, Catholic, and

³² “State Dedicates New Monument,” *Gazette*, (June 17, 1964): 3, accessed from records at the State Capitol Museum.

³³ “Thursday Hangout- Unholy Alliances: DeMille and the Fraternal Order of Eagles 3/7/19,” Daily KOS, March 7, 2019, <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2019/3/7/1839932/-Thursday-Hangout-Unholy-Alliances-DeMille-and-the-Fraternal-Order-of-Eagles-3-7-19>

Protestant faiths were represented. Boy scouts presented the flag.³⁴ The FOE was making a bold statement and claim, both locally and nationally, about religious identity by erecting all these Christian memorials.

In 2001, these types of memorials gained notable attention in the media after a Supreme Court ruling determined that a Ten Commandment monument in Indiana, similar to the one on display in the Wesley Bolin plaza, was unconstitutional. Following that decision, the Arizona chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU, called for the removal of the memorial on the state grounds in the Wesley Bolin plaza claiming it was a violation of the separation of church and state. An 80-year-old member of the FOE lodge in Arizona, Art Wright, stated that if the memorial was taken down from the state capitol that he would take it and bring it back to the Eagles lodge.³⁵

Two years later the ACLU declared that it was planning to ask a federal judge to force the removal of the monument from the plaza if the state didn't make plans to remove it. They sent a letter to the members of the Legislative Government Mall Commission threatening legal action against them. Eleanor Eisenberg, the executive director of the Arizona Civil Liberties Union, claimed that their local chapter received three or four calls each year from people who objected to the monument being in the plaza. "I think the law is pretty clear and quite recent," Eisenberg pointed out, "Posting

³⁴ "State Dedicates New Monument," 5.

³⁵ Richard Ruelas. "COMMANDMENTS JUST DON'T MEAN WHAT THEY USED TO." *Arizona Republic*, Aug 13, 2001, <http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/238069725?accountid=4485>.

the Ten Commandments is an endorsement of specific religions.”³⁶ Because the Wesley Bolin Plaza is on state grounds, the ACLU argued that it is combining religion and state and therefore, unconstitutional for state taxpayers’ dollars to be paid for its upkeep and maintenance.

Shortly after the ACLU made these statements, another case rose in the national limelight. Though the Supreme Court had previously declared certain Ten Commandments memorials to be unconstitutional and ordered their removal, a similar situation took place in Texas and went to the Supreme court as the 2005 *Van Orden v. Perry* case. In this case, the argument was about a monument donated by the same Fraternal Order of the Eagles and placed on state capitol grounds in a situation that was almost identical to the one in the Wesley Bolin Plaza and throughout many other states. In *Van Orden vs. Perry* the Supreme Court ruled that the monument display was constitutional.³⁷ After this ruling, the tension surrounding the memorial and the calls for its removal subsided and the issue was never brought to court in Arizona. The Ten Commandments Memorial still stands in the Wesley Bolin plaza today, its controversy from over a decade ago seemingly forgotten. But the question remains, does the memorialization of one specific religion or belief system silence or exclude religious pluralism from having a place in the public space?

Monument to Pioneer Women

³⁶ Michael Clancy. "ACLU SEEKS RELIGION-FREE BOLIN PLAZA." *Arizona Republic*, Jul 18, 2003. <http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/238360326?accountid=4485>.

³⁷ *Van Orden v. Perry*, 545 U.S. 677 (2005)

The women who erected the Monument to Pioneer Women tried in their wording to be inclusive of all the various women pioneers who settled Arizona. But, looking closely, one sees that without actually stating it, their memorial does favor one religion's contributions over the others. This section will take a closer look at how this monument does this and also how a monument to pioneers and settlers in Arizona silences the contributions made by those Arizona natives who were already here when the pioneers arrived.

On April 20th, 1968, the Squaw Peak Camp of Arizona, the local chapter of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers (DUP), hosted a dedication ceremony in the rose garden at the Arizona State Capitol grounds for their new Monument to Pioneer Women which they had donated to the state. The statue "To the Arizona Pioneer Woman" honors women who traveled west to help settle Arizona. The monument features a sculpted copper figure of a woman holding her baby. Her backdrop is a covered wagon, evidence of her commitment in crossing the plains to come to Arizona. This was a common national theme of pioneer memorials at the time to feature the "Pioneer Mother" with a baby in her arms displayed in front of a wagon. The sculptor, Charles B. Martin, was an employee of the Phoenix City Planning Department. Of the sculpture, one newspaper article at the time of the dedication noted, "The face and expression of the mother, though calm, shows the courage with which the pioneer women bore the tremendous hazards and hardships of their journey into the wild wilderness."³⁸ This pioneer statue, like countless others built throughout the nation, was to commemorate the contributions of the pioneer

³⁸ "Pioneering Spirit Depicted in Sculpture Designed and Created by City Employee," *COPMEA City of Phoenix Municipal Employees Association Inc*, June 1968, 6.

settlers. Roberta Clayton, a member of the local Arizona chapter of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers wrote about the memorial:

“The lives of the pioneer women of Arizona
Stand as an eternal monument to greatness
Interwoven in the stories of their lives
They have left unsurpassed examples
Of courage and self-denial
This monument in stone which we have to dedicate
Stands as a visible evidence
Of the love and honor we pay to their memory
Rich is the heritage of the descendants of these
brave and noble Pioneer Women.”³⁹

The statue was built following six years of research and fundraising by the Squaw Peak Camp of DUP. According to the *Arizona Republic*, the thirty women who were members of this organization “worked on fashion shows, luncheons, donated \$50 each, had cake sales, cookie sales, rummage sales and rounded up other donations to raise the money.”⁴⁰ The wording on the monument’s plaque came after much contested discussion. Although the headquarters of their association wanted the women to place specific names on the memorial, the group of women feared that by naming specific women who

³⁹ “Dedication of the Monument to Pioneer Women by the Squaw Peak Camp of Arizona Daughters of the Utah Pioneers,” Department of Library, Archives & Public Records, Nov 21, 1968.

⁴⁰ Mary Dumond, “Statue Honoring Arizona’s Women Pioneers,” *Arizona Republic*, April 16, 1968, 17.

pioneered Arizona, they would undoubtedly leave someone out. As a result, the women wrote a more general inscription, listing some of the key occupations and roles that pioneer women played in Arizona without listing specific names.⁴¹ In this way, the monument served a broader purpose in commemorating all Arizona women pioneers. However, a closer look at the wording on the monument shows that while trying to be all inclusive, the statement of pioneers in 1876 coming from the North is a pointed reference to specifically Mormon pioneers who came to Arizona at the time. Most of the ladies of the DUP were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the Mormons, and so while the wording was an attempt to be inclusive, it is obviously pointing prominently to the contributions of the Mormon pioneer women.

Finally, with the monument completed, the dedication ceremony was held in 1968. The program featured songs sung by descendants of Arizona pioneer families, a dedicatory prayer by the Vice Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, and speeches from members of the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, the mayor, and the governor.

Bertha Kleinman, a poet and member of DUP wrote a poem featured inside the dedication program that spoke of the pioneers' example and legacy they left behind for their future posterity and all Arizonans. A piece of Kleinman's poem stated: "Welding together the State we love best, our own ARIZONA the Star of the West. Here are your youth who will follow your tread, reaping the fullness your bounty has spread. Here in your City, in architrave splendor-here our MEMORIAL graces the sod, Graven in COPPER to weather the ages, stanchioned for Time where your footsteps have trod."⁴²

⁴¹ Dumond, "Statue Honoring," 19-20.

⁴² "Dedication of the Monument to Pioneer Women," Nov 21, 1968.

This poem is evidence of how this memorial helped these women make their claim about the importance of their forbear's contribution to the state and their pride in this aspect and how it has shaped their local identity.

Historian Cynthia Prescott, expert on pioneer memorials, argued that over the years, this memorial fell out of touch with the citizens of Arizona and other visitors to the capitol and future memorial plaza. She said, "meanwhile, aging reduced both the novelty of the Arizona pioneer monument and its ability to attract public attention. As its shiny copper tarnished, Charles B. Martin's 1968 tribute to *Arizona's Pioneer Women* blended in among a growing array of memorials placed in a plaza next to the state capitol in Phoenix."⁴³ She goes on to state that, in general throughout the nation, and true for Arizona as well, "pioneer monuments fell out of favor in rapidly growing cities as urban westerners abandoned the Pioneer Mother Movement's backward gaze in favor of pursuing modern structures closely resembling those in eastern cities."⁴⁴ Over the years, this memorial faded into the background of the Wesley Bolin plaza, overlooked as newer and more prominent memorials were built in the plaza. While the memorial is made to the contributions of pioneer settlers who moved into the area and accomplished many good things, its presence leads to the exclusion and silencing of the history of the indigenous population who were settled in this area before the pioneers ever arrived.

⁴³ Cynthia Prescott, "Chapter 3: Memory and Modernity in Pioneer Family Monuments (1940-1975)," 9.

⁴⁴ Prescott, "Chapter 3," 3-4.

This chapter looked at three memorials that were placed on the state capitol grounds by three different groups, each making a specific claim on the public space. The Confederate Monument, the Ten Commandments Memorial, and the Pioneer Women Memorial are all part of larger memorialization trends that were occurring nationally. And though they may each claim to be an attempt at inclusion, or made to unify a certain group, they represent an erasure of other histories. They produce an erasure of racial conflict, an erasure of pluralism of religion, and an erasure of native peoples from the public landscape and narrative. These monuments' imposition of their own specific values on public space were an attempt to control the national discourse through various symbols and limited narratives. Because these monuments seek a narrow definition of Arizona, their placement on the state capitol grounds glaringly highlights other groups who are excluded and unrecognized, left as silences on the landscape. This causes these monuments to be out of touch with later attempts with the memorial plaza to create a more inclusive space.

CHAPTER 3

CONSTRUCTING THE MALL & DEDICATING THE WESLEY BOLIN MEMORIAL PLAZA

Today, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza has become a unique space, a place where visitors come to learn about history, or to remember and honor the sacrifices made by so many. But the sanctity of this space was created gradually, although to a large degree it was born during the national bicentennial and consecrated by the memorial to the USS Arizona. However, this re-imagining of the plaza began with a more mundane set of issues related to the continued need for space in the capitol building, as well as the aging infrastructure that encompassed the capital. The area surrounding the state capitol was packed with low-slung office buildings and housing dating to the period after World War I and the surrounding neighborhood presented a challenge to planners and state leaders as they considered the future of the state capitol grounds in the 1930s. By the 1950s and 1960s, these issues had ripened, with planners not only confronting issues of space and design, but also rethinking how the capitol could tell the story of Arizona and become a place where people could come to learn about, remember, and commemorate the state's history. Throughout the restoration of the state capitol building and the creation of the Wesley Bolin Plaza, beginning with the USS Arizona memorial, this space was reimagined and constructed over time to become a place where Arizonans' local and national identity could be molded and shaped through an understanding of their history.

Urban Renewal and the Capitol

Even with the built-on additions throughout the early 20th century, lack of space continued to be a pressing issue as the Arizona State Capitol building could not keep up

with the expansion of state agencies and their employees. According to historian Jay Price, because the building was “designed to meet nineteenth-century needs, [it] quickly became cramped and crowded with the growing bureaucracy.”⁴⁵ In the 1960s, as part of President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society, a host of new government agencies were added such as the Department of Security, the Office of Civil Defense, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Transportation, just to name a few. The rapid expansion of the bureaucracies quickly created a need for more office space beyond the existing capitol building. Finally, some government agencies and administrative offices moved out of the capitol and into neighboring buildings across the street from the old capitol building.

Newspapers of the time agreed regarding the limitations of the capitol and noted that some sort of larger change was necessary. For instance, in 1955, the *Arizona Republic* reported, “The present capitol is a shame and a disgrace to the State of Arizona. It is outmoded, outdated, impossible to properly heat or cool...What this state needs is a capitol building of which the people can be proud; one that will stand as a monument to the progress and progressiveness of Arizona.”⁴⁶ In response to this need, the state commissioned architectural planning, and several architects suggested ideas for designs of a new state capitol building. Even the state’s and nation’s most prominent living architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, put forward an idea he called the Oasis, a plan that completely reimagined the capitol building as a new modern structure. Wright’s plan

⁴⁵ Price, "CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS," 359,

⁴⁶ Price, "CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS," 372.

even proposed moving the capitol to Papago Park. In the end, none of these ideas came to fruition.

Eventually, in 1971, the State Legislature approved construction of the Executive Tower that would rise nine floors and connect to the current State Capitol building through the west side. The legislature felt it necessary that this new building, in which the governor's office would be located in, be connected to the old state capitol building so that it would continue to be connected to the seat of the government according to constitutional requirement.⁴⁷

The new building coincided with two important milestones in history: the nation's bicentennial anniversary and the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. With a national celebration looming, Arizona legislators recognized that they needed to make a greater effort to preserve and to celebrate the state and region's history and so began to make plans accordingly. This topic continued to gain fervor on the national level as well and in the 1960s Senate Bill 3035, the National Historic Preservation Act, passed. This bill required government agencies to work to preserve historic buildings and other sites. With all this focus on historic preservation, and as the time of the bicentennial approached, the goal of improving the way the state of Arizona preserved its history and its collective memory was evident in the actions of the Arizona legislation. And one of the first things that needed immediate attention and change, was the state capitol building itself.

⁴⁷ Carman, *Under the Copper Dome*, 35.

Since the State Capitol building was already in need of updates to make it function effectively, the legislature decided now would be a perfect time to preserve the building and restore it, turning it into something that would cause Arizonans to take pride in their history. According to the *Arizona Republic*, “The feeling was widespread that the charming old Capitol building should be restored and maintained as a symbol of Arizona heritage.”⁴⁸ So, with this idea of maintaining Arizona’s heritage, the state legislature voted to restore the building to its original territorial design. Although the estimated cost was about 8 million dollars in order to make an exact reconstruction of the state capitol building, the Arizona Legislature originally appropriated only one million dollars for this restoration project to turn the “old statehouse” into a visitor information center and museum with a partial restoration of the old state capitol.⁴⁹ Construction began in the fall of 1974 after the executive offices moved into the new tower located directly behind the historic state Capitol building. The State Capitol Restoration Steering Committee, a four-member committee chosen by the governor, appointed Phoenix architect Gerald A. Doyle, to direct the Capitol restoration project. Doyle sent out notices in the newspaper asking for the community to send any photographs, documents, or other information about the original Arizona capitol building in order to create the most accurate restoration possible.

Doyle worked hard to ensure that the light fixtures, woodwork, painting, carpet, and all the fixings inside the building were as close as possible to their original design.

⁴⁸ “From a Tent to A ‘Taj Mahal’,” *Arizona Republic*, Jan 10, 1976, 22.

⁴⁹ Bill King, “Cost of Restoring State Capitol to 1900 Form put at \$8 Million,” *Arizona Republic*, May 12, 1974, 3.

The plan for the original 1900 Capitol building was for the dome to be made of Arizona copper. The territorial legislature was unable to afford it and unable to convince the mines to donate, so at the time, the dome had been merely painted to look as if it was made of copper. However, during the restoration project, the Arizona Mining Association donated 30,000 pounds of copper to use for the dome and roof of the Capitol building.⁵⁰ Now Arizona, the copper state, would finally have its copper dome. As part of the plan for the restoration of the Arizona State Capitol building, the *Arizona Republic* reported that “the entire State Capitol area” would be “transformed into a modern complex of new buildings conceived as a ‘mall’ or corridor of City, County, State, and Federal government offices along Jefferson and Washington Streets.”⁵¹ In the middle of all these surrounding buildings would be the memorial plaza.

This State Capitol Restoration process took several years to accomplish and bits and pieces of the capitol opened up as they were completed over the years. In 1974, the State Capitol was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Then began the first phase of the construction, completed in 1976, which included work on the roof, a partial restoration of the exterior of the building, and the installation of the copper dome. The second phase of construction included restoring much of the interior work of the building in addition to further exterior work. January 5, 1979 marked the unveiling of part of the restored Capitol building, the completed entrance and rotunda portion of the building, where Governor Babbitt greeted crowds following his inauguration.⁵² Then in February

⁵⁰ “From a Tent to A ‘Taj Mahal’,” 26.

⁵¹ “From a Tent to A ‘Taj Mahal’,” 27.

⁵² “Babbitt Greets Well-Wishers in State Capitol Rotunda,” *Arizona Republic*, Jan 5, 1979.

1979, on the anniversary of Arizona receiving its statehood, the governor, Senate President, and several senators met in the restored old Senate chambers in the Capitol building for the official opening of the restored Capitol and Senate chambers.⁵³ By August 1979, the *Arizona Republic* reported that 60% of the Capitol restoration work was complete and many people were already visiting the state capitol on a daily basis. The Senate President said of the restoration of the historic state capitol, “We feel that the people of this state should have a sense of Arizona’s history and where it’s been.”⁵⁴ He wanted the citizens of Arizona to be proud of their state and its history and to feel a connection to it. The curator of the new State Capitol Museum stated, “Arizona has a marvelous attitude toward its heritage. People here are proud of their history, and want to document it.”⁵⁵ The third phase of the construction was the restoration of the Supreme Court and original House chambers, as well as finishing parts of the museum portion of the building.⁵⁶ The museum tells the story of Arizona’s territorial days, the history of its statehood, and displays various memorabilia from those time periods. This effort to promote a feeling of pride in the state was evident in the state capitol restoration project process.

At its completion, the restoration provided Arizona with a new pride and outlook on their state identity. The *Arizona Republic* reported that the finished state capitol

⁵³ Goodnow, Cecelia, “Senators visit Renovated Capitol to Celebrate State’s Admission Day,” *Arizona Republic*, Feb 15, 1979.

⁵⁴ “Visitors Flock to State Capitol as Restoration Work Continues,” *Arizona Republic*, Aug 18, 1979, 1.

⁵⁵ “Visitors Flock to State Capitol as Restoration Work Continues,” *Arizona Republic*, Aug 18, 1979, 1.

⁵⁶ “Visitors Flock to State Capitol,” 13.

building renovation involved “an authentic historic restoration of the building’s interior and exterior, and concentrates on a return to the original elements.”⁵⁷ The Arizona State Capitol Building “remains the centerpiece of the capitol complex in downtown Phoenix...and functions as a museum on territorial and state government history.”⁵⁸ This historical restoration process that transformed the state capitol and the surrounding area gave Arizonans a renewed pride and appreciation for their state. It was now a place where Arizona’s history could be taught, commemorated, and appreciated.

Dedicating the Wesley Bolin Plaza

Plans for the creation of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza were also underway during the years of the Capitol Building Restoration project. “Over the years, the front plaza has hosted public functions from celebrations to protests.” Price describes how the area in front of the state capitol was transformed into the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in the late 1970s which consisted of “extending the capitol’s ceremonial space several hundred feet east to the head of Washington Street, where the anchor of the U.S.S. Arizona rests.”⁵⁹

As the nation’s bicentennial drew closer, along with the plans to restore the State Capitol building, Governor Castro asked the State Legislature in 1975 to “appropriate \$440,000 for a new State Capitol Mall, which will include a memorial to sailors who died on the USS Arizona at the beginning of World War II.” The legislature approved \$5,000

⁵⁷ McElfresh, Suzanne, “Face Lift for Capitol brings back Old Look,” *Arizona Republic*, Feb 17, 1982, 2.

⁵⁸ Carman, *Under the Copper Dome*, 36.

⁵⁹ Price, “CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS,” 377.

to begin the mall project.⁶⁰ They planned for the new Capitol Mall to be a place where memorials to Arizona's state history could be commemorated. The legislature's plan was for the mall to be built east of the Capitol in an area bounded by 15th and 17th avenues and Adams and Jefferson streets. Small apartment buildings that had been converted to offices over the years were across the street from the Capitol building and were torn down to create the space for the new memorial plaza. This plan to create a mini state mall with all the monuments and memorials in one place, following the style of the National Mall in Washington D.C., would provide a place for Arizonans, and visitors to the state, to walk around and see pieces of the state of Arizona's history in a single place. This park of memorials in Arizona is quite unique in comparison with other state capitols that typically will have only one or two simple memorials or statues directly outside their capitol buildings. Twenty years after its creation, one man who moved to Arizona with his wife after retirement remarked, "what a creative idea it was to cluster these memorials in one park rather than scattering them around the city."⁶¹

The plan was that the new State Mall would stretch from the State Capitol building to the 10-ton anchor of the USS Arizona as the crowning piece of the mall located on the far end. The original plan was that the mall would be ready for dedication by December 7, 1976 for the 35th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. Although the mall was not completed and ready to be dedicated when the date arrived, the anchor itself was placed there and dedicated as a memorial at that time.

⁶⁰ "Castro Seeking Funds for Mall," *Tucson Daily Citizen*, Aug 14, 1975, 1.

⁶¹ Donald S. Bowman, "Want to Learn Arizona History? Start with the Arizona Capital," *Arizona Senior World*, May 1998.

The memorial plaza was named after the governor Wesley Bolin. As work continued on the State Capitol Mall, Bolin suddenly and unexpectedly passed away in March of 1978. A few days later, on March 8, 1978, just four days after Governor Bolin passed away, the 33rd legislature announced that it would name the memorial plaza after the governor, officially designating it the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza. Joint House Resolution No. 2003 was unanimously passed, which stated “that to memorialize the leadership and friendship of Governor Bolin to residents of and visitors to this state and to perpetuate his memory, the area located east of the State Capitol Building in Phoenix... be designated the ‘Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza’.”⁶²

In 1983, the dedication of the plaza finally took place. One description found in the *Arizona Daily Star* about the appearance of the plaza at the time of its dedication stated, “the plaza is partly a grassy mall capped by a flag display and an anchor from the USS Arizona, sunk at Pearl Harbor.”⁶³ Though in 1983, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza had been approved by the State Legislature more than five years previously, and the *Arizona Republic* noted that the “conversion of a state parking lot into a tree-lined minipark was completed a year ago,” delays continued to push back its dedication date.⁶⁴ The official dedication ceremony took place on July 8, 1983 with Secretary of State Rose Mofford presiding at the ceremony. Governor Babbitt spoke at the dedication of the plaza. In their speeches they acknowledged Governor Wesley Bolin’s role in the state and his strong advocacy of Arizona and its history. Before he died, Bolin said of the Capitol

⁶² Image of Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza Plaque

⁶³ John DeWitt, "Officials, Legislators join for Memorial to Bolin," *Arizona Daily Star*, March 9, 1978.

⁶⁴ "Late Gov. Bolin lauded at Plaza Dedication," *Arizona Republic*, July 9, 1983.

and the mall, “I am concerned about the preservation of Arizona heritage, and I urge the continuation of the capitol restoration program.”⁶⁵ The plaza was named in his honor because of his years of dedication and hard work on behalf of the state and for his support of the state capitol’s historic preservation project.

This process involving the restoration of the State Capitol Building, combined with the creation of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza shaped the landscape into a place that would tell the story of Arizona history, engender loyalty to the state, and create a stronger state identity in addition to the national identity so many Americans already have.

Memorial Placement in the Plaza

The Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza is under the care and direction of the state, and more specifically, the Legislative Mall Commission. House Bill 2088 provided for a legislative commission that would handle development within the state mall. This bill states that its purpose was to establish “a legislative governmental mall commission to provide for the orderly and beneficial growth and development of the governmental mall in a manner that promotes the interest and welfare of this state.”⁶⁶ The mall commission approves changes and oversees activities within the Wesley Bolin Plaza.

The process of proposing, receiving approval, and then building a memorial on state grounds consists of several steps in a political process. The individual, group, or organization that wants to place a monument in the Wesley Bolin Plaza has to have a

⁶⁵ Image of Wesley Bolin Plaza Plaque.

⁶⁶ H.R. 2088. (1985) (enacted) Monument Documents from Museum Folder, Image 2796, Arizona Capitol Museum.

member of the state legislature sponsor their proposal. It is up to the individual or group to pay for the cost of the memorial because no public funds or taxes can be used to pay for privately sponsored memorials. After the senator or representative proposes the bill it is voted on by the Legislature. If the Legislature approves it, it is sent to the Governor for a signature. Then, the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) reviews the design and dimensions and decides where the best place is in the mall for the memorial or monument to be placed. ADOA then submits its review to the Legislative Governmental Mall Commission. Next, the group or individual proposing the monument is required to provide the Legislative Governmental Mall Commission with the planned design for the monument as well as a plan to maintain and provide continued care for their monument or memorial after its construction. Following that, the Historical Advisory Commission will “review the historical integrity of the monument or memorial” to make sure it is historically accurate.⁶⁷ Then, the Legislative Governmental Mall Commission, after consulting with the ADOA, approves the final design, location, and requirements for maintenance of the monument or memorial. Finally, following the legislature’s approval, the group or individual has two years to complete and dedicate their monument or memorial to the state of Arizona. This process ensures that the monuments and memorials on the plaza are well constructed, taken care of, and as historically accurate as possible. It also ensures that they will reflect well on the state of Arizona, its history and heritage.

USS Arizona Memorial, the Anchor of the Plaza

⁶⁷ “Procedure for Establishing a Monument or Memorial on Wesley Bolin Plaza.” Monument Documents from Museum Folder, Image 2806, Arizona Capitol Museum.

The USS Arizona Memorial, the first to be placed in the plaza, serves as a capstone and the focal point of the memorial plaza, giving the new space meaning and purpose. On the floor in the middle of the rotunda in the State Capitol building is the Arizona State Seal. This beautiful tile, mosaic seal in the center of the rotunda is a prominent representation of Arizona's history. In the seal, the five C's of Arizona are found, something that from a young age Arizonans are taught about in conjunction with Arizona's history. 1,100 feet from rotunda with the Arizona seal sits the USS Arizona anchor. The anchor is located on the far end of the plaza, and the distance of 1,100 feet between the anchor and the Arizona state seal symbolizes a foot for each person who lost their life on the USS Arizona battleship. Thus, the building of the USS Arizona memorial breathed new life into the capitol grounds and framed the newly created plaza. Its placement at the far end of the plaza, and its connection stretching all the way to the rotunda of the historic state capitol building, made way for a landscape to be created and molded over the years to form a sacred space for visitors to ruminate about their local, state, and national identity.

The USS Arizona Memorial in Phoenix is unique in a multitude of ways and has been added to over the years to become what it is today. What started out as the USS Arizona Memorial has now become a larger World War II Memorial with several pieces added over the years. The Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza houses the signal mast and anchor of the USS Arizona, as well as the restored gun barrels of the USS Arizona and USS Missouri. There is also an impressive display across the street within the State Capitol building museum of the silverware from the USS Arizona (also known as BB-39). These artifacts were each received or placed at the plaza over a number of years and

together make up one of the most prominent and poignant memorials at the Wesley Bolin Plaza. This memorial provides a physical place where people can gather together to remember what took place at Pearl Harbor and the sacrifice made by those there. But, in addition to being a place of remembrance specifically for Pearl Harbor and World War II veterans, it has also developed into a place where all veterans of any war, as well as their families, go to remember and honor those who have gone before them. Attending the annual commemoration ceremony on the anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor is a tradition for many families, inspiring its attendees and causing a deep appreciation and feeling of gratitude for those who gave their lives and those who continue to serve. These annual ceremonies make this sacred space become a living memorial through providing veterans, families, and other groups a space to regularly come to commemorate, honor, and remember those who sacrificed for their country.

An Archetype: The USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor

On December 7th, 1941 Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was attacked, bringing the United States into World War II. Under a barrage of bombs, the USS Arizona battleship sunk within minutes of the initial attack. 1,102 men onboard the ship lost their lives that day, with only 334 survivors. One memorial to the USS Arizona is located in Pearl Harbor over the sunken USS Arizona battleship and another stands in the Wesley Bolin Plaza at the capitol of the state after which the great ship was named.

Soon after the war, discussions took place about how to memorialize Pearl Harbor in a way that would honor the memory of the men who died there. In 1950, a wooden platform with a flag was erected on the remaining superstructure over the ruins of the USS Arizona battleship in Pearl Harbor Hawaii. It stood as a temporary memorial, the

only memorial at the time, to the 1,102 men who lost their lives that day. In 1957, sixteen years after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the *Eugene Guard* wrote an article about the plans of the Pacific War Memorial Commission to “encase the rapidly rotting hulk of the big ship in concrete and steel as a permanent memorial.”⁶⁸ This memorial would replace the temporary one in Pearl Harbor, providing a permanent viewing platform over the sunken ship. Admiral E. B. Harp who served as the Pacific Fleet chaplain observed, “Many times I wished that something might be done to preserve, enhance, and give permanent significance to what had already become, to countless numbers, a sacred shrine. Now those hopes and dreams, we are encouraged to believe, will soon become a reality.”⁶⁹

The memorial fund received donations from all across the nation. According to the *Eugene Guard* newspaper, the Pacific War Memorial Commission planned a nationwide fund-raising drive with a goal of raising \$500,000 to “rehabilitate the sunken battleship and make it into a fitting memorial to the men who lost their lives.”⁷⁰ The Hawaiian legislature approved \$127,000 to donate to the memorial, and funds were raised by other groups as well, including the Fleet Reserve Association and even the Arizona Memorial Committee of Phoenix.⁷¹

After being authorized by Congress, in 1958, President Eisenhower signed the bill allowing the Navy to build this memorial to those who served on the USS Arizona. The USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor was completed and dedicated on Memorial Day,

⁶⁸ “Shrine to USS Arizona’s Crew Planned,” *The Eugene Guard*, December 8, 1957.

⁶⁹ “Shrine to USS Arizona’s Crew Planned,” 32-33.

⁷⁰ “Shrine to USS Arizona’s Crew Planned,” 3.

⁷¹ Associated Press, “Hawaiian Rites Brief This Year,” *Arizona Republic*, December 8, 1959, 6.

May 30th in 1962. The *Austin American Statesman* called the memorial “one of the most dramatic structures of its kind and a fitting tribute to the men it honors.” The white stone edifice dips in the center to a height of 14 feet and then rises on each side to a height of 21 feet. The architect described this piece of the memorial’s design as “expressing initial defeat and ultimate victory.”⁷² The design evokes a sense of reverence for this sacred space which is the literal resting place of over a thousand men.

More than a million people visit the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor each year. Visitors travel out to the memorial on a Navy boat. There are three rooms; the first is the museum room which has artifacts salvaged from the sunken ship. Next, there is the central assembly area where openings allow visitors to have a view of Pearl Harbor. The third room serves as a chapel or shrine room that has a marble wall with all the names of the men who died on the Arizona battleship that day. Here, fresh flowers are often left by families near the names of their loved ones. A visitor center, built on the shore in 1980, helped accommodate the numerous visitors coming to the memorial.

Symbolism is often used in memorials and this one is no different. The wall of the entrance to the Visitor Center is the same length as the distance from the waterline to the USS Arizona’s main deck. There is also an anchor from the ship that sits above a reflecting pool. It is evident how, in many different ways, the various aspects of the USS Arizona and World War II memorial in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in Phoenix, are patterned after the design and sacred nature of the Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor. The memorial in Pearl Harbor serves as the archetype and the ones in the state of Arizona

⁷² “A Memorial Still Stands,” *Austin American Statesman*, December 5, 1971, 2-3.

follow it in their structure and in the way pieces of the ship and other relics are used to create a sanctified space of remembrance and honor.

USS Arizona Anchor

The anchor was the first piece to become a memorial to the USS Arizona in the Wesley Bolin Memorial plaza. In 1972, as plans for the construction of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza were being conceived, the anchor was transported to Phoenix from the Pearl Harbor Naval Supply Center as “a Navy gift to the name and people of Arizona.”⁷³ It was kept in government storage in Phoenix until its dedication in 1976, a few years before the Wesley Bolin Plaza Memorial was totally completed. After receiving this gift from the Navy, the Capitol Mall Committee planned for it to be used as a memorial in the newly imagined plaza. According to a report in the *Arizona Republic*, the anchor was “simply in dormancy while architects prepare and Arizona ponders the shape and style of a State Capitol plaza that will definitely enshrine the mighty souvenir.”⁷⁴ Tom Burgess, a marine who served at Pearl Harbor on the day of the attack, later worked for the state police and one of his jobs was guarding the state Capitol. He remembers, “one night in 1976 the USS anchor was brought to the plaza. ‘They told me to make sure no one don’t steal it,’ he said, laughing since the anchor weighs 19,585 pounds.”⁷⁵ Since the state first received the anchor, it was always part of the plan that it would be a prominent piece of the Memorial Plaza. The *Arizona Republic* reported that, “one of Arizona’s finest

⁷³ Paul Dean, “Massive Relic of Pearl Harbor Moored Among Tumbleweeds,” *Arizona Republic*, August 8, 1973, 9.

⁷⁴ Dean, “Massive Relic of Pearl Harbor,” 8.

⁷⁵ Mike Rynearson, “Pearl Vet recalls Attack,” *Arizona Republic*, December 6, 2003, 19-20.

Bicentennial projects involves all of the good people of Arizona as they erect a beautiful \$65,000 Arizona Anchor Memorial, a proud reminder of the 1,102 crewmen who gave their lives at Pearl Harbor.” The newspaper article encouraged citizens of Arizona to donate to the memorial by sending checks or money orders to the Arizona Bicentennial Memorial Fund.⁷⁶

The anchor’s design and placement in the plaza is symbolic. Out of 450 designs put forward, the committee chose Rod Friar’s design for the memorial. An article in the *Arizona Republic* described the design stating, “The two-level display will be 100 feet by 60 feet with reflecting pools, attractive walkways and colorful landscaping.”⁷⁷ The anchor weighs approximately ten tons, and the chain weighs about one ton. It sits atop a circular drum-like base. The names of all those who died on the USS Arizona on December 7, 1941, are engraved on twelve bronze plaques encircling the base.⁷⁸ These plaques list the names of all 1,102 crewmen who lost their lives that morning during the attack. The anchor is located on the far end of the plaza, approximately 1,100 feet from the middle of the rotunda in the State Capitol building, symbolizing a foot for each person who lost their life.

The USS Arizona anchor was officially dedicated as a memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza by Governor Castro on December 7th, 1976, thirty-five years after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The inscription on the base of the anchor memorial states, “In memory

⁷⁶ “The USS Arizona Anchor Memorial on the East Mall of the Capitol,” *Arizona Republic*, November 30, 1976.

⁷⁷ “Remember Pearl Harbor! By Helping to Build the USS Arizona Anchor Memorial,” *Arizona Republic*, June 27, 1976.

⁷⁸ Arizona State Capitol Museum, “Arizona Remembers: The 50th Anniversary of the Attack on Pearl Harbor,” Department of Library, Archives & Public Records, 1991, 3.

of the gallant men who gave their lives on December 7, 1941 on the battleship U.S.S. Arizona during the attack on Pearl Harbor.”⁷⁹ At its dedication all of the branches of military service were represented and participated with military flyovers and a grand celebration. Over 2,000 people attended the Capitol to dedicate the memorial. A time capsule containing the names of all the donors was presented and sealed, not to be opened until July 4th, 2075. The donor list included more than 17,000 Arizona schoolchildren who donated their coins to the building of the memorial.

The dedication of the USS Arizona Anchor Memorial was extremely personal and meaningful for many of those who attended. At the dedication, the mothers of three men who lost their lives aboard the USS Arizona laid a wreath at the base of the anchor. Governor Castro stated at the ceremony, “today it is our privilege and honor to officially dedicate this memorial, a symbol here on our state Capitol grounds of the last debt and the eternal gratitude of all Americans.”⁸⁰ Father Moore, the director of Brophy Preparatory School gave the invocation and spoke at the ceremony. This memorial holds a special feeling of significance and meaning for him because his brother died aboard the USS Arizona in the attack. “We are proud that the name of our state is linked to such a symbol of national heroism.” Father Moore declared, “May this monument be an

⁷⁹ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza USS Arizona Anchor Memorial Plaque

⁸⁰ John Schwartz, “2,000 Visit Capitol to Dedicate Display of USS Arizona Anchor,” *Arizona Republic*, December 8, 1976, 14.

inspiration to all citizens for greater patriotism, loyalty, and devotion to our country and to protect, foster, and serve its lofty ideals.”⁸¹



Figure 2: View of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza from the anchor of the USS Arizona looking through the plaza and toward the State Capitol Building. Photo by author.

USS Arizona Signal Mast

The second addition to the USS Arizona memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza was the signal mast from the ship. The dedication of the USS Arizona Signal Mast took place on December 7, 1990. Since the mast was the highest point on the ship, it was part of the superstructure of the ship that remained above the waterline following the attack. This mast was removed shortly after the bombing at Pearl Harbor and the Chief of Naval

⁸¹ Schwartz, “2,000 Visit Capitol,” 8.

Operations sent it to a naval armory under the command of his close friend, Commander Keyes, who lived in his hometown of Ohio. There, the mast was modified and used for training purposes for a number of years. The modifications that took place were an added 36 feet of length to the mast's original 26 feet, as well as adding the yards, or cross pieces, to the top of the mast. According to the memorial plaque, the vertical shaft is to represent "the 1177 crewmen who gave their lives on the 'day of infamy,'" and "the Yard stands for all those who served aboard."⁸² When the naval armory closed, Commander Keyes gave the mast to a naval engineer who stored it on his property for another ten years. Robert Manzetti, from Glendale Arizona, learned of the mast's existence while visiting his daughter who lived in Ohio near where the mast was stored. After learning of its existence, Manzetti along with Earl Field, a professor in Arizona, formed the U.S.S. Arizona Signal Mast Committee. The committee purchased the mast and transported it to the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza in 1990. Allen Perhach who helped install the mast noted, "I was told to be very careful in its installation as it was valuable to the men who gave their lives defending it."⁸³ The signal mast stands majestically in the plaza, visible from all over the grounds and from the State Capitol building. The 57ft mast stands tall as a physical reminder of those men who died that day on the USS Arizona.

The signal mast is still actively used as part of the ceremonies today. It flies the flags of the United States, the State of Arizona, the POW/MIA, the U.S. Marine, and the U.S. Navy flag. At the annual ceremony held at the USS Arizona/World War II Memorial in the Plaza, there is always a flag raising at the signal mast. After that, there is a flyover,

⁸² Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza USS Arizona Signal Mast Memorial Plaque

⁸³ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza USS Arizona Signal Mast Memorial Plaque

during which the signal mast is the focal point where everyone turns to watch the planes fly over the plaza. It is truly a remarkable sight to see planes from that time period fly over the signal mast as everyone stands, watching in silence. The addition of the signal mast presented Arizonans with another relic of history that, along with the anchor, served as a means of remembrance of the day of infamy and the state of Arizona's physical attachment to that historic and tragic event. Having a physical artifact from such a momentous and national event helped Arizonans claim a place of importance and belonging in the national narrative.

USS Arizona Display

Several more unique artifacts from the USS Arizona are located across the street in the State Capitol Museum. There are several items of importance here, a piece of the superstructure of the battleship, an American flag, and the silver and copperware donated by the state of Arizona that was used aboard its namesake battleship. A piece of the USS Arizona battleship is on display in the museum as part of their permanent USS Arizona exhibit. This piece of the superstructure was removed from the ship in 1942 and stored at Waipio Point, Oahu until 1995.⁸⁴ The American flag on display in the museum was salvaged from the sunken USS Arizona shortly following the attack in 1941. It was originally given to Chief Engineer Joseph Dowdy by members of the salvage crew. He in turn gave the flag to the American Legion in 1942 and the organization then donated it to the State of Arizona where it now resides.⁸⁵ These two items were actually on board or somehow part of the USS Arizona at the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Because of

⁸⁴ Arizona Capitol Museum Collection, *USS Arizona Relic*, 1995.018.001.

⁸⁵ Arizona Capitol Museum Collection, *American Flag*, 1990.244.001.

the historical merit and poignancy of these relics, they inspire a feeling of awe and almost sacred reverence among visitors touring the museum.

There is also a sizable room in the museum that is full of displays of the USS Arizona silver service. The silver and copperware were donated to the battleship by the state of Arizona when it was first built and named after the state. It was customary in the early 1900s for the state to provide the silver for its namesake ship. However, the frugal new Arizona state government did not want to use tax money for this purchase. As a result, the money had to be fundraised privately to purchase the silver which came out to a cost of \$9,000. William A. Clark, owner of a copper mine in Jerome, donated \$5,000 to purchase the silver and other Arizona mine owners pitched in to pay the difference. The silver was presented to the Captain of the USS Arizona on December 27th, 1919.

Arizonans and the copper mine owners also wanted copper incorporated into some of the pieces of the silver service as a way of including something that Arizona was uniquely known for. Each piece is carved with some engraving or symbol that is representative in some way of the state of Arizona such as desert landscapes or the state seal.

In January, 1941, the ship was stripped and prepared for battle which meant that the items considered non-essential, such as the silver, were removed. The set of silver was placed aboard a few other ships over the years, but was eventually returned to the state of Arizona. The silver service was given to the Arizona Capitol Museum for public exhibition in 1991 where it has remained ever since.

USS Arizona Gun Barrel and WWII memorial

In 2013, the state added the next portion of the memorial to the plaza featuring the guns of the USS Arizona and Missouri and a comprehensive memorial to all those from

Arizona who served in World War II. The memorial is officially called *Arizona's World War II Memorial: Guns to Salute the Fallen*. When secretary of state Ken Bennett heard that a 14-inch gun from the USS Arizona and a 16-inch gun from the USS Missouri were going to be sold for scrap metal, he wanted to obtain these two artifacts to “honor World War II veterans and complete a memorial fitting of their sacrifice.” Both gun barrels are significant because the sinking of the USS Arizona marks the beginning of the United States involvement in World War II, and the Japanese surrender aboard the USS Missouri marks the end of the war. Bennett said, “by adding these two visible bookends that represent the beginning and end of the war, we will encourage people to reflect and admire the strength and courage it takes to defend a nation.”⁸⁶

There are also many more deep layers of symbolism in each piece of this memorial. In the walkway between the two gun barrels there are nine steel pillars that form the shape of a battleship hull and list the names of the 1,902 Arizona men and women from all branches of the military who died in the war. The names are on stainless steel plates that hang on the sides of the pillars. Ken Bennett pointed out that “in the sunlight when the wind blows, they appear like slight waves on the water. It’s just gorgeous.”⁸⁷ The nine sets of blue steel pillar that hold up the name plates represent the nine minutes it took for the USS Arizona to sink after being bombed. Another example of symbolism used in this memorial is a 400-inch limestone horizontal marker in the concrete which connects the USS Arizona and USS Missouri gun barrels. The limestone

⁸⁶ “USS Arizona Gun Belongs in Permanent 70th Anniversary Tribute,” *Arizona Capitol Times*, August 15, 2011, 6.

⁸⁷ Douglas Towne, “Pearl Harbor Day: Arizona’s WWII Memorial Full of Symbolism,” *AZ Central*, December 7, 2018, 6.

is divided into one-inch increments with each inch mark representing 1,000 military lives and symbolizes the more than 400,000 United States service men and women who died during World War II. Another piece of symbolism is the length from the center flagpole east of the anchor, looking west to the first marker (BB-39) is 608 feet which is the length of the USS Arizona from bow to stern. And the length to the second marker (BB-63) is 887 feet 3 inches which is the length of the USS Missouri from bow to stern. When aware of these facts behind the symbolism built into every part of this memorial, it becomes even more meaningful and awe-inspiring. Memorials often use these types of symbols to evoke a certain emotion in the visitor in addition to simply providing or listing the facts about the thing being commemorated.

This memorial provided a culmination of Arizona memory of World War II. Since many pieces of this memorial were artifacts salvaged from the Arizona that were there at the time it sank, it is important to note that the gun barrel from the USS Arizona was not actually on the ship at the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After having been on the Arizona for 13 years, that barrel had recently been taken off to be relined and tested and as a result, was not aboard the ship during the attack, although it had been used previously. It was later placed on the USS Nevada during the D-Day invasion and Operation Dragoon. The 16-inch gun barrel from the USS Missouri was on board the battleship and used during Okinawa and Iwo Jima. Due to the size of the guns, the state faced several big hurdles in transporting them from Virginia to Arizona; but finally, they succeeded and the groundbreaking ceremony for the memorial took place on December 7, 2012 at the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza. Though the plaza had previously approved several monuments throughout the years to various regiments that served in World War

II, it did not have a comprehensive World War II memorial that honored the names of all the Arizonans who died in the war until now.

After years of hard work and planning, *Arizona's World War II Memorial: Guns to Salute the Fallen* was dedicated on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 2013. Eighty-seven organizations laid wreaths at the new memorial and the Secretary of State Ken Bennett, who was so instrumental in the planning and building of the memorial, gave the keynote address. This final addition truly completed the memorial by having the anchor and signal mast on either side of this new, complete Arizona World War II Memorial.

Now each year at the anchor of the USS Arizona, with people seated alongside the World War II memorial, a commemorative service is held. During one such ceremony, a journalist named Ed Montini remarked, "An anchor once meant to hold fast a massive ship is now meant to secure a memory."⁸⁸ At these annual ceremonies there are speakers, presentations of wreaths by various organizations, a flyover, a band, and many



Figure 3: The 2018 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Ceremony. The anchor is on the left and the gun barrels and WWII memorial are on the right. December 7th, 2018. Photo by author.

⁸⁸ EJ Montini, "That Anchor we use to Secure a Distant Memory," *Arizona Republic*, December 8, 2015, 4.

veterans and families in attendance. It is held every year on December 7th, beginning at 10:55 which is Arizona time equivalent of when the first bomb was dropped at Pearl Harbor. Now, over 75 years after the attack, groups and individuals are still gathering to remember and to pay tribute to the sacrifice made by those who served. Montini eloquently concludes, “Memory, like a ship without an anchor, can drift. Although not here. Not at Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza...the memory will persist. It will not drift. It is well anchored.”⁸⁹

During this period of increased emphasis on historical preservation, the state capitol building restoration project and the creation of the Wesley Bolin Plaza, over time this space became a place where Arizonans’ local and national identity could be molded and shaped through an understanding of their history commemorated on the landscape. All of the pieces that encompass and make up the World War II memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza are very celebratory in their collective memory. The memorial serves as a means to promote pride in the sacrifice of Arizonans and the role they played in World War II. Because it is often considered a noble and victorious war, its memory is very well anchored and celebratory; however, as we will see by looking at other memorials in the plaza, such as the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial and the 9/11 Memorial, not all memorials have this same triumphant tone or carry this shared patriotic collective memory.

⁸⁹ EJ Montini, “That Anchor,” 15, 18-19.

CHAPTER 4

DEBATING WAR AND PEACE IN THE PLAZA

Following the construction of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza, many memorials were moved across the street from the State Capitol and onto the grounds of the newly built state park. Arizona now had its own mall full of monuments and memorials similar to the national mall in Washington D.C., though on a much smaller scale. Other monuments and memorials that had been merely ideas before, were now able to be erected in this newly dedicated space. Certain memorials in the plaza “reframed the national enterprise in local terms.” Kirk Savage argued that “Local memorials reduced the abstract concept of the nation and the national mission to a more immediate and more graspable cause.”⁹⁰ Many of the monuments in the Wesley Bolin plaza take a national event or idea and make it into its own by commemorating Arizona’s role in the larger event. The monuments and memorials in the plaza highlight and represent Arizona’s unique contribution. Through building and visiting monuments, the people of this state have made the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza into a sacred space by cultivating the landscape as a living memorial to who they are.

Several of the monuments and memorials built in the first few years after the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza was created, continued to be added onto over the years. These additions to the memorials have enhanced the space and added further interpretation, meaning, and understanding to the event being memorialized. It is evidence of how history and collective memory continue to be shaped and re-interpreted

⁹⁰ Kirk Savage. *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*, (2018): 183.

over time. While it is difficult to choose only a few memorials, this chapter will look at two memorials that each have a unique story of how we, as a state and a nation, reconcile with tragedy and war. They are crucial not only because of their effect on Arizona history and memory but on the landscape of the memorial plaza as a whole. They are the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the 9/11 Memorial. These memorials are unique to Arizona in their history, design, and significance and they create a conversation about how this state and nation negotiates war and peace.

Arizona's Memorial to Vietnam Veterans

Historian Kirk Savage, who has written extensively about monuments, argues that the building of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. in 1982 changed how memorials were viewed by the public. According to him, instead of just being objects that are simply viewed by visitors, “national memorials are now expected to be spaces of experience, journeys of emotional discovery.”⁹¹ Following the building of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, instead of just a piece of stone used to commemorate an event or learn about history, many memorials began to be built as places of introspection, of healing, and of remembrance to difficult histories instead of just celebratory ones. In contrast to the USS Arizona Memorial which provides a set narrative of national unity and a positive remembrance of the war, it was necessary for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be a more contemplative and reflective memorial. Because it was a war so full of controversy, the memorial needed to provide a space to honor the sacrifice of those

⁹¹ Savage, *Monument Wars*, ” 21.

who fought and gave their lives, without celebrating or making a statement about the war itself.

Arizona's Memorial to Vietnam Veterans followed the style of the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, commonly referred to as the Wall, in Washington D.C. Yet over the years, it has become a memorial that is, in its own way, unique to Arizona. Similar to the memorial at the nation's capital, the one in Arizona is made of black granite and lists the names of all those from Arizona who lost their lives fighting in the war. John McCain, who gathered the list of the 613 men from Arizona who died in the Vietnam War, said about this memorial, "The bravery displayed by these heroes was unmatched, but let us hope and pray that the sacrifices made by these young men will not go unheralded."⁹² This memorial is a sacred space where veterans, the family members of those who died, and many others, can come to remember those who sacrificed and fought in the Vietnam War.

The dedication of the Arizona Memorial to Vietnam Veterans took place on Saturday November 9th, 1985, following a Veteran's Day parade. The original pieces of this memorial consisted of ten black granite columns with the names listed in alphabetical order of all the soldiers who died or were missing in action from Arizona. It also included a statue of three soldiers called *The Fallen Warrior*. The *Arizona Republic*, reporting about the dedication ceremony in 1985, stated that "an estimated crowd of 3,000 people" attended, including Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Retired Army General William Westmoreland who had commanded the troops during the Vietnam War, John

⁹² Phoenix Genealogical Society, *Arizona's Memorial to Vietnam Veterans*, (1987); 2.

McCain, who fought and was a prisoner of war in Vietnam, as well as many veterans and family members of those who died or were missing in action.⁹³ An enthusiastic crowd gathered to remember those who had served and to celebrate the fact that their state was receiving a space of its own where veterans and loved ones could come to honor the memory of those who died.

The symbolism of this memorial adds to its significance on the landscape of public memory. The ten black granite columns represent each of the ten years of fighting that took place in Vietnam. The individually carved names on the granite columns allow visitors to take rubbings of the names of their loved ones as a memento with them. The columns, being made of black granite like the Wall in Washington D.C., allow viewers to see their own reflection as they read the names, forging a connection with those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. The statue, *The Fallen Warrior*, was created by Jasper D'Ambrosi, a veteran who served in the Army Air Forces during World War II. During the process of creating this statue, he met with many Vietnam veterans to listen to their stories and used them as inspiration for his sculpting. D'Ambrosi stated that his goal was to "portray young soldiers as warfare's victims as much as its heroes."⁹⁴ He succeeded in this through his statue which features two young soldiers helping a fallen comrade. It is a deeply moving piece especially with its poignant location right next to the columns of names of countless young men, just like those represented by the statue, who lost their lives in service of their country.

⁹³ Larry Levy, "Weinberger helps to unveil memorial honoring Viet vets," *Arizona Republic*, November 10, 1985, 3.

⁹⁴ Guy Webster, "'Warrior' artist dies in Valley," *Arizona Republic*, August 3, 1986, 7.

Over the years, pieces were added to the memorial and annual ceremonies were held at this memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza to remember the Vietnam War and the veterans who served in it.⁹⁵ In 2001, a special rededication ceremony was held after the Vietnam Veterans memorial was expanded. The addition included a circular concrete base with various bronze plaques around it that provide a timeline telling the events of the Vietnam war. This provided context for visitors to the memorial. Now they could walk around and learn about the major events and battles that took place from year to year during the conflict. This addition to the memorial was well done because it did not seek to interpret the war or to say whether what was done was right or wrong, it simply listed the facts and dates to provide the viewer with more background information. Adding this to the memorial gave more context to the Vietnam war without taking the focus away from those who served and gave their lives.

Several other pieces were added to the memorial at this same time. A bronze map of Vietnam was also placed on the ground of the sidewalk, visible right as one reaches the section of the plaza that houses the memorial. Bronze plaques were added along the short wall that runs alongside the path leading up to the memorial. These plaques have short inscriptions that are from, or dedicated to, various individuals or groups including those who lost loved ones and those who served, as well as Vietnamese people or organizations. In addition to the United States and Arizona flags that were flown previously at the memorial, the Flag of the Republic of South Vietnam was also added to the flagpole. It was raised during this rededication ceremony and has been there ever

⁹⁵ Arthur Sloane, "Vietnam Remembrance Day Activities Set for Bolin Plaza." *Arizona Republic*, Apr 21, 2012.

since. All of these seemingly small aspects that make up a memorial contribute to the numinous feeling of that space. Historians Lubar and Kendrick in speaking of museum objects but it applies well to memorials too, stated that the “source of value is not just the object itself but the meaning behind it.”⁹⁶ This is very true of the Vietnam Memorial, it’s not the monetary value of the granite wall, the bronze plaques, or the flags that give it value; it is the depth and meaning behind these objects that makes them so significant.

In 2016, a final addition was placed in this space that makes up Arizona’s Memorial to Vietnam Veterans and it changed the feeling and meaning of this space. It is a wall designed by a Vietnam veteran, Colonel Joe E. Abodeely. The wall has four metal panels on it that, in the words of its creator, “truly honors all Vietnam veterans by explaining the geo-politics, the media influence, the results of the antiwar movement, and the extraordinary service of the Vietnam veteran under the circumstances of the times.”⁹⁷ These panels have the potential to become the subject of some controversial debate over their one-sided interpretations. When visitors read the inscriptions, it changes the feeling there in that space from being one of remembrance and an almost sacred memorialization, to one of political controversy. Instead of simply honoring the veterans for the service and sacrifice they made, the words on these panels are an attempt to explain away why certain events took place during the war, many that were highly

⁹⁶ Steven Lubar and Kathleen M. Kendrick, "What is Worth Saving" and "A Treasure House," in *Legacies: Collecting America’s History at the Smithsonian* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 24.

⁹⁷ John O’Brien, “Rededication of the Vietnam Memorial Honoring All Vietnam Veterans at Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza,” *Glendale Daily Planet*, March 22, 2016, <http://glendaledailyplanet.com/tuesday-march-at-noon-rededication-of-the-vietnam-memorial-honoring-a-p469-95.htm>

politicized, and trying to state why they weren't wrong or as bad as they seemed. It also has many echoes of the current political climate in which it was added with its emphasis on placing the blame on the media. Since this addition presents an extremely specific and political viewpoint of the war, I think this portion of the memorial may face some backlash or controversy in the future because of how significantly it changes the dynamic of the space of the Vietnam Memorial.

As time goes on and the family members of those memorialized and veterans who served pass away, the audience for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Arizona has begun to shift. Now a large portion of the visitors who come to view the memorial each year are fourth grade students who come to the State Capitol on their school field trip. I served as a chaperone on one of these fields trips to observe how the children reacted to the various monuments and memorials. While the plaques, which do involve a lot of reading, didn't hold their attention for long, many of these kids who had previously been rowdy and running around, quieted as they faced the columns of names and looked at the statue of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Even at their young age and with a limited understanding of what took place in this war, it was as if they could feel a difference in that space, they could feel the seriousness and significance of what they were seeing. It was a neat moment to witness again and again as these kids would run up the path and come to a stop in front of the columns, reverently walking from one to the other until they ended up at the statue of the soldiers. Even those young school children sensed the unique feeling that is present at this memorial.



Figure 4: A note left on a pillar of the Arizona Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Photo by author.

But even though the majority of the audience coming to view the memorial has shifted over time, it is still a meaningful place of memory for many, which is especially evident in how visitors interact with the memorial. Every time I have gone to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at the Wesley Bolin Plaza, there has been something there that someone has left at the wall or by the statue. A small American flag, flowers, and other little tokens are often left there; however, one item I saw left at the memorial there when I once visited had the greatest impact on me. When I visited a few days after the 4th of July, I saw a seemingly simple sticky note was placed on one of the columns with a note to a Lieutenant that had died in the war. The note ended with the words, “Luv you, Pam.”

I was so touched to realize that for many people this is still a sacred place where they come to feel close to, and to honor the memories of their lost loved ones. Kristin Hass called the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in D.C. a living memorial because of the many items daily left at the Wall, she said, “The leaving of things at the Wall is partly a product of this long history of memorializing; those who leave things are using the names of the dead to remember enormous individual and national losses.”⁹⁸ This same thing, though on a much smaller scale, is still taking place at the memorial in Arizona as well. By placing items at the wall, people can feel a connection and can leave something to the memory of those they love.

The spaces where these memorials are housed are crucial aspects of the historical landscape because as James Loewen points out, “what the landscape says about the past can still arouse strong feelings today.” This has been proven true in the example of the Arizona Vietnam Veterans Memorial.⁹⁹ This memorial experienced many changes and additions since its original dedication in 1985, but it remains a place of history and remembrance where visitors can go both to learn more about the history of the war, as well as to feel gratitude for and honor the memory of those who sacrificed their lives while fighting for their country.

Arizona 9/11 Memorial

Like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Arizona 9/11 Memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza follows the patterns of many other 9/11 memorials built. One way it follows

⁹⁸ Hass, *Carried to the Wall*, 63.

⁹⁹ James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: Touchstone / Simon & Schuster, 2000), 596.

the larger national 9/11 memorialization trends is that it encompasses artifacts from the tragedy, making the space more sacred and meaningful to visitors by providing a connection to the event. However, this memorial was also an attempt to do something different as well, and as a result, it is very unique in its inclusion of Arizona's specific history and impact of 9/11, which makes it singular among other 9/11 memorials throughout the nation.

Memorials have a large impact on their visitors and the surrounding community because they make a statement or claim about something specific. When plans for the 9/11 memorial first began to be discussed, Clyde Morgan, who had designed about ten other memorials throughout the Southwest, had just recently designed the Enduring Freedom memorial which stands near the 9/11 Memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza. The Enduring Freedom Memorial is built to honor the memory of the soldiers who died in the "war on terror" following 9/11. When asked about ideas for the design of the 9/11 Memorial, Morgan noted how crucial it is when designing a memorial, to remember that it will be around for generations. He gave what would prove insightful advice in the wake of the coming 9/11 memorial in Phoenix when he said, "[Memorials] are a statement by a society. You don't want to take that lightly. It needs to be making a statement one hundred years from now."¹⁰⁰ So while some memorials seem to be universally respected, loved, or appreciated, others tend to bring with them a little more weight, tension, and controversy. One such memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza that became a subject of heated debate was the Arizona 9/11 Memorial.

¹⁰⁰ Barrett Marson, "Arizona Plans 9/11 Memorial," *Arizona Daily Star*, September 1, 2004, 16.

The Arizona 9/11 memorial is called *Moving Memories*, and is made up of several parts. The basic structure is a circular steel rim with a hole in the middle and is about fifty feet in diameter. It has fifty-four laser cut inscriptions in the metal that, when the sun shines on them, reflect the words onto the concrete base below. Like many other memorials in the Wesley Bolin Plaza, this one includes physical artifacts from the event it is commemorating. Within the memorial is a piece of steel taken from the World Trade Center site, and the concrete on which that steel piece rests is made from some of the stone from the rubble of the Pentagon, and soil from the field in Pennsylvania where the final hijacked plane crashed. The inclusion of these pieces of material from each of the sites of the attack give Arizona a physical connection and representation of what happened thousands of miles across the country but affected everyone's lives here in this state as well. A plaque at the memorial explains the symbolism of the design, including how the combination of letters and shadows from the inscriptions come to a total of about three thousand, which represents the approximate number of people killed in the 9/11 attacks. The plaque also states, "Memory is the sun that lights the material of history. The sun moves...Our memories appear then transform in time...Decisions make history. Moving memories reveal it. The sun shines on us all."¹⁰¹

The wording on the actual memorial itself is unprecedented and unparalleled. The inscriptions are made up of two timelines that go across the circular beam. The top inscription tells the timeline of events, such as news clippings of thoughts and emotions as they unfolded on the day of the 9/11 attacks. The bottom inscriptions include events

¹⁰¹ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza 9-11 Memorial Plaque

that occurred following 9/11, evidence of the impact of the attack specifically on Arizonans, as well as on the country and the world. The explanation on the memorial's plaque points out that included in the inscriptions are "quotations and a diverse range of sentiments taken from the historical record of the victims, national events, global events, Arizonans' stories, and Arizona relief efforts."¹⁰² The sunlight reflects through these inscriptions and onto the concrete base, representative of the many layers of meaning that the various statements have, with the hope that the viewer will bring their own reflections and interpretations as they visit. This background and context of what the memorial plaque stated was its goal and the reasons the committee had for choosing to include what it did, are important in being able to understand, from the committee's point of view, its choices about what to include in the memorial. This background information will help visitors understand the bigger picture better of what took place during the heated controversy that arose shortly after the memorial's unveiling.

The 9/11 memorial took considerable time and effort to build. At the beginning of 2003, the Arizona legislature began pushing for a bill to create a 9/11 memorial to be placed in Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza. Governor Janet Napolitano appointed a group of legislators and citizens to form a committee to plan the memorial. The following year, the Arizona 9/11 Memorial Commission began a fundraising effort. In addition to cash donations, the commission collected old cell phones that could be recycled, refurbished and sold in other countries to raise money. A Tucson commission member pointed out that the collecting of old cell phone to raise money is particularly meaningful since so

¹⁰² Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza 9-11 Memorial Plaque

many of the victims in the September 11th attacks communicated with their families and loved ones for the last time through their cell phones.¹⁰³ Many stores in Arizona participated by having collection boxes where people donated their old cell phones to the cause. Along with the cell phone donations, bumper stickers and commemorative pins were sold throughout the state to raise funds for the memorial.

The Arizona 9/11 Memorial Commission sought the most accurate historical analysis possible of Arizonans' experiences of 9/11 and in the days following the attack. To accomplish this, the commission enlisted the aid of Arizona State University's history department to collect newspaper clippings and other sources to find out what Arizona citizens were doing and feeling in this wake of this tragedy. The hope behind this endeavor, was that the 9/11 memorial would be a living memorial, meaning that it would include an educational component that would help this monument remain relevant throughout the years, to continue to touch lives and be useful for generations.¹⁰⁴ There were many stories in the newspapers about the progress of the 9/11 Memorial in Arizona. These articles were positive and showed a seemingly unified expectation that at the five-year anniversary of the attacks, Arizona would be one of the first states to erect a permanent and truly unique, meaningful, and significant memorial in remembrance of 9/11. The memorial commission and many citizens had high hopes for the memorial. No one expected the reaction to it to be so sudden and so negative.

¹⁰³ Mary Vandevreire, "Drive on for Funds for 9/11 Memorial," *Arizona Daily Star*, June 27, 2005, 4.

¹⁰⁴ Sherry Anne Rubiano, "Funds Pursued for 9/11 Memorial," *Arizona Republic*, July 10, 2005, 23.

On September 11th, 2006, on the fifth anniversary of the attack, the Arizona Memorial *Moving Memories* was dedicated in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza to honor the victims of the 9/11 attacks. Donna Bird, whose husband died at the World Trade Center on September 11th, attended and spoke at the dedication ceremony. She observed that the circular design of the memorial is fitting because, “the shape of the memorial encourages visitors to feel close and connected, not only to each other but also to information so important that has been carved out of steel in order to remain forever available.” In her speech she continued, “It envelopes all who are present and has the capacity to exclude the rest of the world so that the experience becomes intimate, personal and shared.”¹⁰⁵ It seems that all those attending the dedication ceremony were moved by the memorial, appreciative of its significance, and thought it did its job well. However, in the following weeks, a lot of the press and discussion regarding the memorial quickly became negative and controversial and the debate would continue on for months and then years.

Less than two weeks after its unveiling and dedication in the Wesley Bolin Plaza, Arizona’s 9/11 memorial fell under sharp criticism. Several inscriptions on the monument caused controversy online over their political nature. Online bloggers began fueling the fire by commenting about the specific inscriptions they considered to be political and unpatriotic. Donna Bird, who also served on the Arizona 9/11 Memorial Commission, faced these accusations by stating that she would not have helped design the memorial,

¹⁰⁵ Howard Fischer, "Arizona Monument Honors 9/11 Victims," *Capitol Media Services*, September 12, 2006, 3-5. https://tucson.com/news/state-and-regional/arizona-monument-honors-victims/article_3b3a078b-dd68-50b5-86a9-a1ed25d5188a.html. Accessed January 8, 2019.

which honors and names her husband who was killed in the attack, if it were political.¹⁰⁶ While some family members of those who lost their lives on September 11th, believed the memorial is a “fitting tribute to those who lost their lives,” others began to call it a “disgrace,” and unpatriotic.¹⁰⁷ However, the outcry against the memorial’s seemingly political inscriptions continued to gain fervor over the coming months.

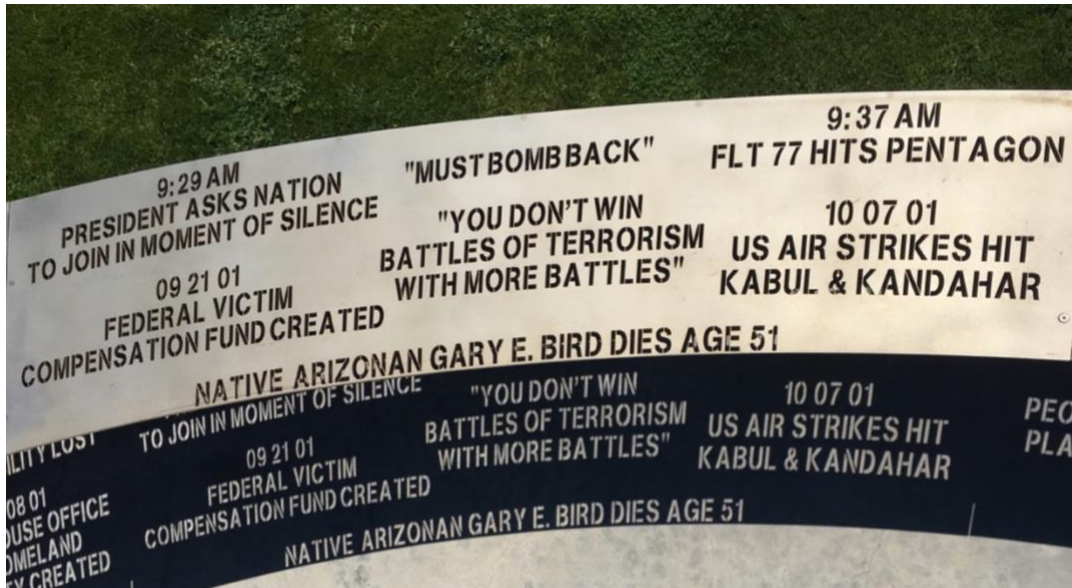


Figure 5: A few of the inscriptions on the Arizona 9/11 Memorial. Photo by author.

The online discussion that fueled the controversy caused people to argue about the memorial without having a complete picture. A large number of those raising their concerns over the political nature of the inscriptions had only read the few inscriptions being circulated online, and had not actually visited the memorial in person. Robert Booker, the executive director of the memorial commission points out the difficulty of having a complete picture of the memorial without visiting it. He stated, “When you look

¹⁰⁶ Beth Lucas, "Sept. 11 Inscriptions Spark Outrage," *East Valley Tribune*, September 23, 2006, 8-9.

¹⁰⁷ JJ Hensley, "9/11 Memorial Inscriptions Stirring Emotion," *Arizona Republic*, Sept 28, 2006, 1-2.

at the breadth of the memorial and do not take language out of context, you begin to see that it really does paint a picture of the emotions that all of us felt on that morning.”¹⁰⁸ This is the case with all monuments and memorials. There is a unique feeling evoked when a person is actually present at the physical memorial, experiencing the space for themselves. That is part of the emotional power of monuments and memorials and it cannot be experienced quite the same way virtually or in pieces. Another key argument made by Booker and his team in the memorial’s favor is that it had undergone a thorough and in-depth public design and vetting process before its erection. The public’s thoughts, ideas, and contributions were sought in every step of the way during the public monthly meetings held by the commission.

However, powerful political voices still called for the memorial to be torn down completely and a new one built in its place. The complaints came from right-wing politicians, and adding further fuel to the political nature of the controversy, one republican candidate for governor even publicly and proudly promised if he was elected he would tear the memorial down. Less than a month after its dedication, Billy Shields, the chairman of the 9/11 Memorial Commission, spoke to the *Arizona Republic* newspaper about the controversy. He expressed remorse and some anger over the politicization of the memorial that was meant to be a sacred and dignified space. He pointed out that all the statements had been vetted and were factual whether people liked it or not. However, in the end he did concede that, because of all the complaints, there was a need to reconvene the committee in order to re-evaluate some of the statements.

¹⁰⁸ Hensley, "9/11 Memorial Inscriptions," 7.

Shields said, “If there are some statements that are really hurtful and offensive to folks, we ought to re-examine them. If we have to remove them we should.”¹⁰⁹ But Shields also pointed out that those who were taking issue with certain phrases they claimed were political or unpatriotic such as *YOU DON’T WIN BATTLES OF TERRORISM WITH MORE BATTLES*, were ignoring the other inscription right next to it that says, *MUST BOMB BACK*. He pointed out that the commission wanted to represent the whole range of conflicted views and emotions that Arizonans were feeling in reaction to the 9/11 attacks and that the inscriptions are not political or one-sided, but are factual reaction statements and inclusive of various points of view. But some still countered back with the argument that while people had a right to say whatever they wanted about the attacks, it was wrong to include those statements on a public memorial at the State Capitol that is supposed to be a collective representative of how Arizonans together remember and honor 9/11.

The 9/11 memorial was very abstract and not at all like other traditional memorials, which also made some people uncomfortable. In addition to taking issue with certain wording on the inscriptions, another common complaint was that the memorial was too political and “does not truly recount the events and sentiments in America on 9/11, nor does it honor those lives who were lost.”¹¹⁰ People had expectations of a memorial that would give a recounting of the events of the September 11th attacks and a list of numbers or names of those who died, as many monuments traditionally included. When instead presented with a more abstract memorial that included snippets of reactions

¹⁰⁹ Chris Ramirez, "Political Row Over 9/11 Memorial Saddens Group's Chair," *Arizona Republic*, October 1, 2006, 12.

¹¹⁰ "9/11 Memorial," *Arizona Daily Star*, December 16, 2006, 6.

about the attacks, it left many wanting more specific information to be listed on the memorial about the day's events and the people involved. Some claimed this further interpretation and explanation was necessary to enable future generations who didn't know about the 9/11 attacks to read its history easily on a panel at the memorial.

Several measures went before the legislature in Arizona for revisions to be completed on the memorial. The House of Representatives voted to remove twelve of the inscriptions that were thought to be politically charged or controversial. The bill ultimately did not pass in the Senate, but in an attempt to smooth over some of the tension, the Arizona 9/11 Memorial Commission agreed to remove two inscriptions. They were, *ERRONEOUS US AIR STRIKE KILLS 46 URUZGAN CIVILIANS* and *TERRORIST ORGANIZATION LEADER ADDRESSES AMERICAN PEOPLE*. It also added several new inscriptions including, *UNITED WE STAND*, *LET'S ROLL*, and *GOD BLESS AMERICA*. They also planned another interpretative and explanatory panel to be added as well to give more context and background to the memorial. ¹¹¹

A compromise was reached and, at the end of 2008, the revisions to the memorial were completed. The new panel placed at the beginning of the path leading up to the memorial includes a summary of what happened on 9/11, including a count of the lives lost. The new plaque also contains a statement of the purpose of the memorial, which states: "The Arizona 9-11 Memorial is established to honor the memory of those who lost their lives in one of this nation's most horrific tragedies, to those who kept their spirit alive through unity and sacrifice, and to serve as a meaningful place for families to reflect

¹¹¹ Randall Archibold, "Effort to Rework Arizona's 9/11 Memorial Fails," *New York Times*, April 17, 2008, 6-7.

upon these events for generations to come.” It continues, “In Arizona, citizens’ memories and stories reflect our shared loss and suffering, including the powerful, diverse emotions and reaction to the attacks and the aftermath. The artifacts, timelines and inscriptions of the memorial provide a reference for these events.”¹¹²

In 2011, another controversy regarding the memorials’ inscriptions arose. A bill was introduced into the House of Representatives in Arizona by a Republican, Representative John Kavanaugh, to have the name of Balbir Singh Sodhi removed from the memorial. The memorial includes an inscription noting the murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh American, who was murdered in Mesa, Arizona four days after the 9/11 attack. Representative Kavanaugh claimed that this murder had nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks and should be removed from the memorial. However, the record shows that this was indeed a hate crime in response to 9/11. The man who murdered Sodhi openly testified that he wanted to kill a Muslim in retaliation for the September 11th attacks. After the bill passed in the House, Republican governor Jan Brewer invited Sodhi’s family to her office where she expressed her sorrow for the family’s loss and then vetoed

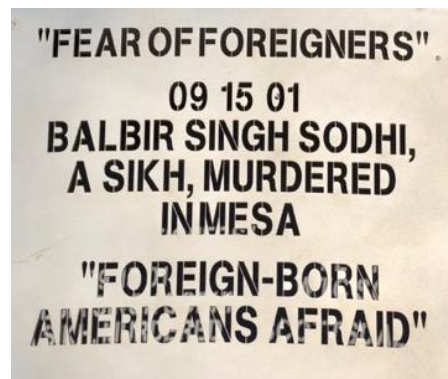


Figure 6: Balbir Singh Sodhi inscription. Arizona 9/11 Memorial. Photo by author.

¹¹² Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza 9-11 Memorial Plaque

the bill, thus keeping Sodhi's memory as part of the memorial.¹¹³ Kavanaugh later apologized for his remarks and for introducing the bill in the first place.

Arizona's 9/11 memorial, *Moving Memories*, intended to be a unifying memorial, originally had the opposite effect, causing significant controversy and division among political lines. Now, some ten years after the revisions were added, the 9/11 memorial seems to have undergone an almost complete turn around and now serves as a unifying space in the plaza, even more appreciated than it was when it was first built. Monuments and memorials to events that are so recent tend to be more sensitive because they had a direct effect on people's lives and so they continue to be contended spaces filled with great emotion. The public tends to have stronger opinions and feelings about these kinds of memorials that commemorate more recent events. This memorial is a great example of how upset the public can get about a memorial. Emotions often run high about the design and wording of memorials because it is something that will last so permanently for generations on the public landscape. Arizonan's wanted a unique 9/11 memorial to remember the events that took place and to feel a connection to how it affected those in their state and in the end, I feel this memorial accomplished that goal well.

These monuments and memorials, built in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza have shaped the landscape of the State Capitol, turning this area into a beautiful, commemorative park. Here visitors from all over can come to view pieces of Arizona's

¹¹³ "Victory – Arizona Governor Vetoes Bill to Remove 9/11 Victim from Memorial," *Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund*, May 2, 2011, <http://saldef.org/news/victory-arizona-governor-vetoes-anti-sodhi-memorial-bill/#.XFSpCc9KgWo>.

history, to learn and to remember these important events and people. Often, as evidenced in these two examples, the creation of these memorials elicits an important and often somewhat difficult conversation about how Arizonans want their history commemorated. This conversation about the historical memory of the state is crucial for the public to engage as it shapes what the future generations will see and learn from the landscape. In this way, the plaza also emerged as a central place that created a dialogue about citizenship and service in Arizona. Over time, Arizonans have turned to this space to stake a claim both on their local identities as Arizona workers and citizens, in addition to their national identity as Americans.

CHAPTER 5

SERVICE AND COMMEMORATING LOSS IN A LIVING LANDSCAPE

The next few memorials will show how the plaza also functions as a landscape that commemorates citizenship and service in Arizona. While many of the memorials in the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza are dedicated to those who lost their lives in war, there are also several memorials in the plaza erected to honor the memory of those who lost their lives in the line of duty and service much closer to home. The Arizona Peace Officers Memorial and the Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial both list the names of first responders who have lost their lives while in action here in Arizona. These memorials follow the memorial archetype of listing the names of those who died that began with the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in D.C. By listing the names of those who lost their lives, these memorials become a sacred space of remembrance.

Although not all monument proposals are passed or able to be funded, the process for building memorials can be proposed by anyone to commemorate almost anything, and as a result, memorials are built to a variety of events and people. Certain scholars studying the subject, question whether this building of memorials to every different group somehow diminishes the overall value and feeling of memorials. But more often than not, these memorials to commemorate losses are extremely effective as they provide a space of healing, a space for visitors to come and to honor those who lost their lives in the service of their community, state, or country.

Peace Officers Memorial

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy officially declared May 15th Peace Officers Memorial Day and the week in which the 15th falls, National Police Week. The first

Memorial Service for peace officers was held at the nation's capital in 1982.¹¹⁴

“Whereas it is fitting and proper that we express our gratitude for the dedicated service and courageous deeds of law enforcement officers and for the contributions they have made to the security and well-being of all our people,” President Kennedy stated in his proclamation, “I invite State and local government, patriotic, civic, and educational organizations, and the people of the United States generally, to observe Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week in this year and each succeeding year with appropriate ceremonies in which all our people may join in commemorating law enforcement officers, past and present, who by their faithful and loyal devotion to their responsibilities have rendered a dedicated service to their communities.”¹¹⁵ By making this proclamation, President Kennedy invoked a national and local sense of gratitude for the service rendered by law enforcement officers. Throughout his presidency, John F. Kennedy encouraged all citizens to consider how they could better serve their country. And his proclamation marked the beginning of the use of the word “service” beginning to be more commonly associated with police officers and firefighters who sacrifice to serve their communities.

The Peace Officers Memorial Board placed a notice in the Arizona Republic at the beginning of 1987 calling for designs for an Arizona Peace Officers Memorial. The notice stated that the design needed to meet the following criteria: “a tasteful, fitting, and

¹¹⁴ “National Police Week.” National Police Week, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.policeweek.org/index.html>

¹¹⁵ U.S. President, Proclamation 3537, “PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY AND POLICE WEEK,” May 4, 1963, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-77/pdf/STATUTE-77-Pg1004.pdf>

appropriate design which incorporates a personal recognition of each peace officer who has died in the line of duty since the year 1963 in Arizona.”¹¹⁶ The original plan was to list all the officers who had died since 1963 when President Kennedy’s Peace Officer Proclamation went into effect; however when the actual memorial in Arizona was built, it ended up being much more comprehensive, listing fallen peace officers all the way back to 1865.

The Arizona Peace Officers Memorial was dedicated in the Wesley Bolin Plaza on May 20th, 1988, during National Police Week. This memorial honors the men and women of law enforcement who lost their lives in the line of duty in Arizona. The memorial consists of an 11-foot statue that stands atop black granite pillars that list the years and names of the slain officers. The statue on top is of a lawman bowing his head as if to reverence the memory of those who lost their lives. The model for the statue was law enforcement officer Gordon Selby, a Phoenix Police detective. He later became the assistant chief of the criminal division of the Arizona Department of Public Safety, and retired in 1977.¹¹⁷ The memorial is within its own little raised area in the plaza surrounded by an enclosed bench for visitors to sit on when they come to this memorial to reflect on and remember those who have given their lives.

The current Arizona Peace Officer Memorial Board has several roles. One is to annually add the names of the officers who have died in the line of duty that year and to hold a dedication ceremony each year to commemorate those whose names have been

¹¹⁶ "Public Notice: Criteria for Design," *Arizona Republic*, February 1, 1987, 2.

¹¹⁷ "Peace Officers Memorial," January 17, 2014, *Arizona Department of Corrections*, accessed January 11, 2019, <https://corrections.az.gov/article/peace-officers-memorial>.

added. The board also works to determine who are eligible for tuition waivers in connection with fallen peace officers. The board is in charge of the maintenance and upkeep of the memorial.¹¹⁸

Ceremonies to add names to the memorial, and to remember those from the past, are held yearly. The first name listed on the memorial is Cornelius Sage, a Yuma County Sheriff who was killed in a shootout in 1865. Unfortunately, more names are added to the memorial every year. While the official annual memorial ceremony takes place to honor and remember the names who have been added, there are also more spontaneous gatherings throughout the year, such as in July of 2018 when a candlelight vigil was held at the plaza for an Arizona officer killed in the line of duty earlier that week.¹¹⁹ This space provides a place for families and loved ones to come, to grieve, to remember, and to honor the memory of those they have lost. Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich who oversees the management of the Peace Officer Memorial board said of the memorial, "If we can honor them in any way, having their names on this memorial where the survivors can come and see their loved one's name, not only to honor them in death but remember them in life and what they lived for, and what they stood for."¹²⁰

Law Enforcement Canine Memorial

¹¹⁸ "Arizona Peace Officer Memorial Board," accessed January 11, 2019, <https://www.azleg.gov/committee/arizona%20peace%20officers%20memorial%20board.doc.htm>

¹¹⁹ FRANK, BRIANNA J. "Candlelight Vigil Held for Fallen DPS Trooper." *Arizona Republic*, Jul 31, 2018.

¹²⁰ Kari Lake, "Arizona Peace Officers Memorial remembers those who lost their lives, while on the job," accessed January 11, 2019, <http://www.fox10phoenix.com/news/arizona-news/arizona-peace-officers-memorial-remembers-those-who-lost-their-lives-while-on-the-job>.

Another group memorialized on the landscape because of their service to the state and community are Law Enforcement Canines. Before the memorial to fallen Canines in the Wesley Bolin Plaza was built, Gordon Leitz, the canine handler for the Mesa Police Department for fifteen years, pointed out that canines who have lost their lives in the line of duty had “never received the proper due for the sacrifices they’ve made.” He said, “We used these dogs to save officers’ lives and they’ve given their ultimate by dying, but we’ve done nothing other than funerals to honor them.”¹²¹ At the beginning of 2004, after receiving approval from the Arizona Police Association, Bill 1213 in the Senate passed which approved the building of a Police Canine Memorial, and fundraising campaigns for the memorial began shortly thereafter. Reporting about the newly erected memorial, the *Arizona Republic* stated, “The valiant dogs that are memorialized gave their lives to protect ours. They build an extraordinary bond with their handlers and do whatever is asked, no matter the danger.”¹²²

The Arizona Police K-9 Memorial was dedicated on April 7th, 2006 at the Wesley Bolin Plaza. It is officially called the Arizona Law Enforcement Canine Memorial. The memorial is made of 4-foot black granite pedestal with the name of each dog who died in the line of duty including their department and year of death. On top of the black granite is a statue of a German shepherd with a police gun belt at its feet, sculpted by Jeff Carol Davenport, who is most well-known for her statue of Pat Tillman at Sun Devil Stadium. The K-9 memorial features another black granite pillar which stands close by with a

¹²¹ Linda Hesler, "Mesa Police Canine Handler Working Hard for Memorial," *Arizona Republic*, August 7, 2004, 3-4.

¹²² Terry Goddard, "Memorial Honors Officers’ Best Friend," *Arizona Republic*, Apr 22, 2006, 7.

plaque and a bench where people can sit and rest or pay their respects. Many K-9 handlers and their K-9 partners participated in the dedication ceremony. At the time of the memorial's dedication, there were 15 dogs named who had died in the line of duty in Arizona since 1974. Statewide there are over 200 canines working for law enforcement agencies. The memorial is located near the Peace Officers Memorial, which honors the names of police officers who died in the line of duty. The statue of the German Shepherd faces the memorial to fallen officers, symbolically reminding visitors that there are less names on that memorial because of the selfless sacrifice of the Canine Officers.

Newspapers at the time of the dedication gave one example of a police dog in action. A few days before the unveiling of the memorial, a canine in Arizona was injured, shot in the line of duty. While expected to fully recover, the occurrence of this event so close to the dedication ceremony brought the sacrifice of these dogs to the forefront of the news right before the memorial was dedicated. The dog who was shot is the K-9 partner of Maricopa County Sheriff's Deputy Jon Anderson. Anderson talked about the difficulty of the decision to send his dog into potentially dangerous situations. "You don't know what you are sending your partner into. They save a lot of officers and risk their own lives, without question."¹²³ The contribution of these dogs is so significant because most of the canines' names listed on the memorial died saving the life of an officer. This memorial is built to show gratitude, and to recognize and respect those canines who died protecting law enforcement officers and the community.

Fallen Firefighters Memorial

¹²³ Faherty, "Group Toasts Police Dog," 12.

The Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial was dedicated in October 2015 and commemorates firefighters and paramedics who lost their lives in the line of duty. It is one of the newest memorials built in the plaza. When completed in 2015, it listed the names of the 119 firefighters and paramedics who died in the line of duty. According to the official website that tells about the memorial's history, "In 1973, eleven members of the Kingman Fire Department lost their lives in a single explosion. In 1990, six firefighters lost their lives in a massive wild fire. In 2013, 19 Prescott Hot Shots lost their lives in the Yarnell Fire."¹²⁴ All these individuals are represented on the memorial. At their 2019 annual ceremony, where the new names placed on the memorial are presented and tribute is paid to them and their families, there were a total of 137 names on the memorial.

Remembering the service given by the fallen firefighters can help a community to better appreciate the reality of the danger faced and sacrifice made daily by firefighters. "Our Purpose is Not to Mourn but to Remember!"¹²⁵ This is the statement on the plaque at the front entrance to the memorial. Every day first responders such as firefighters and paramedics put their lives at risk to save others. Their memorial website notes that, "with nearly 250,000 emergency calls annually, firefighters across the state face the reality of danger every time they respond to a call."¹²⁶ Their sacrifice and dedication saves countless lives.

¹²⁴ "Arizona Firefighters and Emergency Paramedics History," accessed January 11, 2019, <http://azfirefightersmemorial.com/about/history/>.

¹²⁵ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial Plaque

¹²⁶ "Arizona Firefighters and Emergency Paramedics History," accessed January 11, 2019, <http://azfirefightersmemorial.com/about/history/>.

The design of the Fallen Firefighters Memorial is quite unique among other firefighter memorials across the nation. It is one of the largest memorials in the plaza, taking up a considerable portion of area on the far end of the park positioned between the 9/11 Memorial and the USS Arizona Memorial. The memorial's design features a sloping black granite wall with the names of the fallen firefighters beginning back with the first recorded death of a firefighter in the line of duty in Tucson in 1902. Underneath each name, the date and location where the firefighter or paramedic served is listed. Each name also has a place for a small flag to be placed into the wall above it. There is a bell tower in the middle of the memorial because the bell is an important symbol in the firefighters' daily work. Traditionally a bell would alert the firefighters when they needed to leave and when they would arrive back at the station. The bell on the trucks signaled their coming, and so the bell at the memorial has significant meaning to the firefighters and their profession.

There are ten bronze statues atop the wall of life-sized firefighters and paramedics in action. The first grouping of statues includes three firefighters looking forward seemingly ready for duty; they are the wildland firefighters. The first one holds a fire starter to combat wildland fires with controlled burns. The next one is standing on a tree stump and leaning on a pick while holding a radio, and the third figure holds an ax. The next grouping of statues shows three more traditional looking firefighters with their masks on holding a fire hose in a ready position. On the other side is a statue of two standing firefighters, also ready for action. And finally, there is the statue of the paramedics, featuring the man holding a baby and the woman reaching towards them with a stethoscope. These statues make the memorial unique to Arizona's specific

firefighting needs. The two groupings of statues in the middle are similar to any typical firefighter memorial one might see throughout the nation; however, the paramedic statue is rare because it is less commonly used and often recognized as a separate entity from the hero firefighter statue. The statue of the three wildland firefighters is also singular to Arizona and the American West, where the role of fighting wildfires in the forest is unique to this part of the country. This gives Arizona a very exclusive and comprehensive firefighter memorial, different than can be found almost anywhere else in the nation.

The memorial took twenty years of planning, ten years of development, and three years of fundraising before finally completed.¹²⁷ House Bill 2136 allowed for the building of a memorial to fallen firefighters in the Wesley Bolin Plaza. The Arizona Firefighters and Emergency Paramedics Memorial Commission was created in the 1990s and they immediately began to approve tuition waivers to Arizona colleges for the family members, children and spouses of fallen firefighters.¹²⁸ Initially the committee planned to approach the legislature for permission to build a memorial in fall of 2001, but after the September 11th attacks, the commission decided to “put its plans on hold.”¹²⁹ Then the commission waited until the controversy surrounding the 9/11 Memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza was resolved in 2008. Rick DeGraw, the chair of the commission states,

¹²⁷ Anya Rogers, "New Memorial Honors Arizona's Fallen Firefighters," *The Republic AZ Central*, October 18, 2015, 2, <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2015/10/18/arizona-fallen-firefighters-memorial-dedication/74182160/>. Accessed January 11, 2019.

¹²⁸ Rogers, "New Memorial," 8.

¹²⁹ Angela Gonzales, "Firefighter, Paramedic Commission Ready for Memorial," *Phoenix Business Journal*, December 9, 2013, 7, <https://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/blog/health-care-daily/2013/12/firefighter-paramedic-commission.html?sprint>. Accessed March 9, 2019.

“Then we were prepared to go back to the Legislature in 2008 and the bottom fell out of the economy.”¹³⁰ Finally, in May of 2013, the Legislature approved the building of the fallen firefighter memorial, but in June the Yarnell fire killed 19 firefighters in Prescott. Out of respect for those Yarnell firefighters and their families and to not cause confusion about the purpose of the memorial, the committee decided to wait until December 2013 to actively begin raising funds for the memorial in the Wesley Bolin Plaza.

Originally the memorial was to be named for both the fallen firefighters and paramedics; but, to simplify things, the committee shortened the name to Fallen Firefighters although the memorial still honors both firefighters and paramedics. The committee created a website where people could donate to the building of the memorial and follow its progress. Prominent companies in the state, and even some nationally, provided major contributions to the memorial fund. After years of hard work and planning, in 2015, the Arizona Firefighters and Emergency Paramedics Memorial Commission completed their memorial to honor not only the fallen firefighters and paramedics, but their families as well. On the bottom of the plaque at the front of the walkway leading up to the memorial it says, “With each loss of a firefighter, our lives have been lessened. With each sacrifice, our lives have been enriched.”¹³¹ For families that have lost loved ones in the line of duty, the community of firefighters rallying around them often provides an invaluable support system. Underneath the bell tower is an inscription that states that this memorial is a “dedication to the courage and memory of

¹³⁰ Gonzales, “Firefighter, Paramedic Commission Ready for Memorial,” 8.

¹³¹ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial Plaque

Arizona Firefighters and Paramedics who gave their lives in service of others and that honors those who live with their absence.”¹³²

I was privileged to witness a glimpse of the deep meaning this memorial has for many firefighters and their families while attending their January 2019 annual ceremony. On a Friday morning, while touring the Wesley Bolin plaza with an elementary school class, we saw two retired firefighters working at this memorial. When we spoke to them they told us they were cleaning the memorial in preparation for their annual commemoration ceremony where two new names were to be added this year. These men, members of the memorial committee, spent two whole days cleaning and preparing the memorial to show respect for their fallen brothers and sisters. On Sunday, at the ceremony, each one of the 137 names on the memorial was read followed by two mournful bells tolls after each name. While this took quite a bit of time to accomplish, the significance of recognizing each individual’s ultimate sacrifice was a sign of respect and honor to them and to their loved ones attending the ceremony. Bryan Jeffries, president of the Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona, spoke at the ceremony calling the memorial an

¹³² Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial Plaque

“everlasting and stunning tribute” that continues to “memorialize our respect” for the fallen firefighters and their families sacrifices. ¹³³

This is very much a living memorial, where wreaths, flags, and other mementos are often left at this as well as at the Peace Officers Memorial. The names etched into the granite function as an almost second grave marker, and as a result, visitors bring things to leave at the space marking their loved one’s name just as they would to a gravesite in a cemetery. At the 2019 annual ceremony in January, a family took a picture next to the name of their husband and father, a Phoenix firefighter who lost his life in 1977. Having traveled all the way from Ohio to attend this yearly ceremony, one daughter made a rubbing of her father’s name to take with her as a memento. Another woman stood over a name of a loved one for quite some time, just gently touching it before leaving a rose in a glass case next to it.¹³⁴ The poignant and raw emotions I saw on the faces of family members attending this ceremony are evidence of the memorial’s power to provide a place of remembrance and healing for the loved ones of these fallen firefighters. The



Figure 7: Mementos at a Memorial: Rose left by a name and a rubbing taken from the Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial. Photos by author.

¹³³ ¹³³ Kaitlyn Burnham, Personal Notes & Image, Fallen Firefighter Ceremony, January 13, 2019.

¹³⁴ Kaitlyn Burnham, Personal Notes & Image, Fallen Firefighter Ceremony, January 13, 2019.

Arizona Fallen Firefighter Memorial truly provides a place for all Arizonans to remember the sacrifices these first responders made, and for families to honor the memory of their lost loved ones.

The Peace Officers Memorial, the Canine, and the Fallen Firefighters memorials in the Wesley Bolin Plaza are all example of living memorials. They are places where the names are continuously added of those who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty while working to protect the community of Arizona. These memorials provide a space where families, friends, and loved ones of those lost can come to honor and remember the sacrifices made. Even for citizens of Arizona who do not have a loved one whose name is on the memorial, they come here to remember the collective sacrifice, to honor the memory of, and to feel gratitude for, those who have given their lives in service to Arizona. Yet, although the Wesley Bolin Plaza has memorials to so many different groups, people, and events in Arizona history, there are still silences on the landscapes.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: SILENCES ON THE LANDSCAPE

Silences exist when crucial pieces of Arizona's history are omitted from the memorial landscape and recognizing what is missing can sometimes be as telling as what is memorialized. Because the Wesley Bolin Plaza has become a place where visitors come to learn about Arizona and its history, when a crucial part of Arizona's history is missing from the landscape it is important to not only recognize the absence, but to question why it has not been built or what needs to be done to better incorporate that piece of history back into the narrative. Compared to other state capitols and spaces similar to it, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza, overall, has a rather comprehensive representation in its monuments and memorial. In addition to its quite conclusive list of war memorials, the plaza at the Arizona state capitol includes several extremely unique memorials such as the Bill of Rights Memorial, the first one of its kind to be built in the nation, the Arizona Workers Memorial, and a memorial to Armenian Martyrs. And while the plaza is quite diverse and comprehensive, there are some crucial aspects missing from the landscape, such as any kind of memorial commemorating the larger and more comprehensive role Hispanics and Native Americans have played in Arizona's history. While other memorials may reference these groups or include them along with many others, they do not have a memorial unique to their history and contributions to the state. Another group missing from the historic landscape are African Americans. This is in the process of being remedied, as a monument to the Buffalo Soldiers was approved to be built in the plaza, with the hope to be finished and dedicated on the anniversary of

Arizona's statehood, February 14th, 2020.¹³⁵ However, again, like the Navajo Code Talker Memorial, The Buffalo Soldier monument will be a war memorial to African American soldiers instead of a memorial to African Americans' contributions to Arizona in general. It says something significant about the memorialization process and traditions in the state, and generally throughout the nation, that these otherwise forgotten groups are memorialized only for their war service. The state and country as a whole tend to memorialize a group's war service with much more ease, and with hardly any pushback, than to place a memorial to these group's contributions or history in general. For the most part, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza has a conclusive set of monuments and memorials to various wars and groups; however, sometimes the wording or type of memorial to one group can leave out others. This section takes a closer look at the Navajo Code Talkers Memorial, the only memorial found in the plaza of any sort to Native American history in Arizona.

Navajo Code Talkers Memorial

One of the first memorials visitors see as they walk from the state capitol building and enter the center of the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza is the Navajo Code Talker Memorial. This memorial is quite informative about what is memorialized in the plaza because although there is a memorial to the Navajo Code Talkers, it is a war memorial commemorating their military service to their country and no other memorial to the

¹³⁵ "Buffalo Soldiers AZ Territory Monument," <https://buffalosoldiersazterritorymonument.com/> Accessed March 8, 2019.

general contributions of Native Americans and their impact on Arizona exists in the plaza.

Many of the Navajo Code Talkers were from Arizona and they played a crucial role in the history of the nation since they were indispensable during World War II. Twenty-nine young Navajo men were asked to develop a secret code in their native language that more than two hundred Navajo's then used over the course of the war. This code was unbreakable by the Japanese. The accuracy and speed with which the young Code Talkers were able to transmit their messages saved countless lives and ultimately helped the United States win the war in the Pacific. For decades their incredible service went unappreciated, being largely unknown. This monument in the plaza was erected as a tribute to their sacrifice, skill, and service to their country.

In April 2003, Governor Janet Napolitano traveled to the Navajo Nation's Capital in Window Rock Arizona where she signed the legislation that approved the creation of a monument honoring the Navajo Code Talkers, which would be the first such monument in Arizona. Kayenta Representative Sylvia Laughter said of the action, "This has been a long-awaited recognition for them."¹³⁶ Oreland Joe, a sculptor from New Mexico, designed the monument of a young Navajo soldier carrying his Code Talker Radio backpack. Of his design, Joe said, "The main thing is to capture the [Code Talker] in war, trying to relay a message while remaining calm, with noise, fire and people yelling all around him."¹³⁷ Their ability to remain calm and focused on their task of transmitting code is part of what made these young soldiers and their code so effective.

¹³⁶ Kevin Pang, "Code Talkers Memorial is Law," *Arizona Republic*, April 25, 2003, 3.

¹³⁷ Pang, "Code Talkers Memorial," 11.

The Navajo Code Talker Memorial Foundation solicited private donations and made several fundraising efforts, including a penny drive in Navajo schools, to help with the cost of the memorial. At the same time, the foundation was also laying the groundwork for a duplicate of the Code Talker memorial to be built on Navajo land as well. Over the course of the years between the legislation being signed and it being installed in the plaza, many other fundraising efforts took place. Newspapers printed ads promoting two Navajo Code Talkers coming to speak “in an effort to bring attention to and raise funds for the Navajo Code Talker Memorial Foundation.”¹³⁸ These fundraising efforts by the foundation raised money for both the monument to be placed at the Wesley Bolin Plaza and its replica in Window Rock, the Navajo Nation Capital.

Finally, on February 28, 2008 the Navajo Code Talker Memorial Foundation celebrated the installation and dedication of their monument in the Wesley Bolin Plaza. Several Navajo Code Talkers attended the ceremony. The finished product is a statue of a Navajo Code Talker kneeling and speaking into his radio. The 12-foot high bronze statue sits on top of a 4-foot tall rectangular pedestal with the names of all the Navajo Code Talkers listed on bronze plaques.

One of the plaques has the following inscription that explains their crucial role in World War II, “In recognition of the Navajo Code Talkers who distinguished themselves in developing a Navajo language code- the only unbreakable code in modern military history. As members of the United States Marine Corps these young Navajo men performed a unique and exemplary military service that saved countless lives and

¹³⁸ “‘Ramada’ has Spirit,” *Arizona Republic*, August 8, 2004, 2.

hastened the end of World War II in the Pacific theater. This memorial is a tribute to the renowned contribution the Navajo Code Talkers made to the success of the United States military forces during World War II and honor these remarkable individuals for their valor and patriotism.”¹³⁹

Though Native Americans played such a substantial role, especially in early Arizona history, it took so long to erect a monument to Native Americans in the plaza. Yet even then, that monument is only to commemorate their war service to the country and none of the other vital contributions Native Americans made and continue to make to Arizona. There is still no memorial to Native American’s history in the state of Arizona anywhere in the plaza besides the one commemorating their service in the war. Native Americans were such a crucial part of the southwest, and specifically Arizona, and so the fact that no memorial or mention in the plaza is made to their struggles, sacrifice, and history in ways besides military service is a tragedy in need of remedy. Since the plaza has become a place where people come to learn the history of the state, it is so important that the history be inclusive. While the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza has become more diverse and inclusive of various groups on the commemorative landscape, there is still much room for improvement in providing visitors with a wider range of the many voices of Arizona’s history.

The Importance of Monuments and Memorials

Engaging in discussions and studies about monuments and memorials is crucial because this is where so many Americans historical knowledge is formed. Savage

¹³⁹ Image of the Wesley Bolin Plaza Navajo Code Talker Memorial Plaque

summarized the issue of monuments and memorials role well writing that, “monuments aspire to represent the essential America, but as they take shape on the ground, they become entrenched in the complex realities of a living America...not only do monuments retell the story of the nation but in certain times and places they change history itself.”¹⁴⁰ As a nation or state, we cannot change the past, but we can change the way we think about and view it. Because monuments and memorials are such an integral part of shaping the American landscape and the historical memory of the country, it is imperative that historians make a concerted effort to ensure that the history being told on the landscape is as complete, accurate, and inclusive as possible.

Monuments and memorials also serve their purpose when they are able to inspire viewers to change in some way. “A productive memorial must make an impact beyond its enclosed space,” Savage argues, “it must work against the impulse to memorialize itself, that tendency to become absorbed in its own reasons for existence. It must seek connection to the world outside its own.”¹⁴¹ When a memorial teaches the visitor something new, or inspires a person to change or to act differently as a result of their interactions with it, it has done its job. Monuments and memorials succeed when they do more than simply telling their own story, when they have helped in a small way, to make people and the world a better, more informed, and more inclusive place.

The monuments and memorials in the Wesley Bolin Plaza are rich with Arizona history and stories that are waiting to be told. One way to help make the background stories of the memorials, or significant pieces of symbolism more available to the public

¹⁴⁰ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars*, 11.

¹⁴¹ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars*, 287.

would be through a guided tour through an app that visitors could download and use as they walk around the park.

Over the years, the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza at the Arizona State Capitol has been shaped into a place where the landscape of memory tells the story of the history of Arizona. A place where visitors can come to remember and honor those people and parts of Arizona history. Just as the plaza was gradually created over the years, becoming the comprehensive historical park it is today, it continues to produce a unique account of Arizona's history and how the state fits into the national narrative. It continues to foster among its visitors a strong local identity and pride in the state of Arizona.

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