

FLIGHT 93✈️SHANKSVILLE PENNSYLVANIA

MEMORIAL PLAZA/ WALL OF NAMES

Dedicated: September 2011



By John Rucosky, The Tribune-Democrat

FEATURES:

- Quarter-mile walkway along the northern border of the field where Flight 93 crashed at 10:03 a.m. on Sept. 11, 2001.
- Interpretive panels decorate the gateway “arrival court” that leads visitors to the Wall of Names.
- The Wall holds names of the 40 passengers and crew members – each on its own white marble slab alongside the walkway.
- Each slab weighs approximately 1,000 pounds.
- The Wall of Names also mirrors the path United Flight 93 followed on its final descent.

VISITOR CENTER

Size: 6,800 square feet
Dedicated: Sept. 10, 2015
Cost: Part of a \$26 million phase of the park project



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- Museum-style space that includes photographs, artifacts, tactile models, audio and video pieces to convey the Flight 93 story.
- Features a series of interactive exhibits that help explain the crew’s actions that day, including calls they placed in the minutes before the crash, as well as the investigation that followed.
- Exhibit panels laid out in narrow rows that mirror the seating on an airplane.
- On-site book and merchandise store.
- Adjacent learning center, which debuted the same year, offers a conference space for special programs, speakers and exhibits.



A Shanksville Fire Department jacket is among the items at the temporary Flight 93 memorial, as shown in this September 2002 file photo. The temporary tribute was in place until construction began on the permanent Flight 93 National Memorial. (The Tribune-Democrat)

Memorial serves as tribute to 9/11 heroes

It has been 20 years since Flight 93 crashed onto a reclaimed strip mine on Sept. 11, 2001.

Ever since, people from across Pennsylvania, the nation and the world have been traveling to the site to honor the 40 passengers and crewmembers as “heroes” who lost their lives fighting back against terrorist hijackers.

What stood for years as a make-shift memorial – a 40-foot-long chain-link fence showcasing drawings, patriotic hats and handmade signs – has been replaced by a \$60 million national memorial that welcomes as many as 500,000 people annually.

Through designs by Paul Murdoch Architects and Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects, the permanent memorial – under the National Park Service – now includes a modern visitor center, the Wall of Names and the Tower of Voices, a 93-foot-tall musical instrument whose song rings with 40 distinctive tones to honor the actions of the passengers and crew.

To Friends of Flight 93 Board President Donna Gibson, the Flight 93 National Memorial is a vital, lasting tribute to the events of 9/11.

“There are 75 million Americans today who weren’t alive on Sept. 11, 2001,” Gibson said. “It’s important to use moments like this to educate them about what happened that day.”

The 20th anniversary is one of those moments, she said. “Especially, now that we’re 20 years past the events of 9/11, it’s really important to remember the 40 heroes of Flight 93 – what

they did and what they prevented from happening,” Gibson said. Every element added to the park plays a role in telling that story.

The Wall of Names, dedicated in 2011, salutes each passenger and crewmember who died in the crash, their names inscribed in white marble.

Visitors to the wall move along a black granite walkway that traces the flight path the plane took during its final moments.

The concrete and glass visitor center opened in 2015 and doubles as an educational site and museum space, displaying remnants of the plane and other artifacts from the crash and the ensuing federal investigation.

While construction on the park is now complete, efforts to nurture and revive the 2,200-acre property that surrounds the structures remains ongoing.

Volunteers have added thousands of western Pennsylvania native trees in recent years. Over time, they’ll grow as part of a broader effort to bring new life to the scenic site – and restore it to an earlier era, not just before it was scarred by the crash but before it was damaged by years of strip mining.

“The memorial itself was on a very scarred landscape from being on a surface mine,” said Katherine Hostetler, Flight 93 National Memorial’s public information officer.

“Reforestation is also part of making it a living memorial. So, by planting these trees, we’re inspiring future generations and helping to tell the story of what the passengers and crewmembers did here on Sept. 11, 2001.”

“It’s really important to remember the 40 heroes of Flight 93 – what they did and what they prevented from happening.”

TOWER OF VOICES

Dedicated: September 2018
Height: 93 feet
Cost: \$6 million

FEATURES:

- The final addition to the park construction, the Tower of Voices was added near the Flight 93 National Memorial’s main entrance. Construction was completed in 2020.
- Towering C-shaped wind chime with 40 distinctive tones – one for each of the 40 passengers and crewmembers who died on the flight.
- Aluminum chimes – made especially for the monument – range from 5 feet to 10 feet long.
- Built to serve as a “visual and audible reminder” of the heroism displayed by the 40 passengers and crew during the final moments of the hijacked plane’s journey.
- Circular plantings around the monument are meant to resemble soundwaves.
- Cost covered through private donations.



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FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL

Size: 2,200 acres
Design: Architect Paul Murdoch
Cost: \$60 million
Completion: September 2020 **On the web:** [nps.gov/flni](https://www.nps.gov/flni)

MISSION: Honor the heroism, courage and enduring sacrifice of the passengers and crew of Flight 93 and celebrate their lives, commemorate the events of Sept. 11 and protect and revere the “hallowed ground” that serves as their final resting place.

- Site of reclaimed former strip mine.
- Federal government paid \$9.5 million to eight property owners for 1,400 acres of property, including the impact site, to begin developing what is now a 2,200-acre park.
- With more than 167 acres reforested since 2012, the park was created as a “living memorial” that will continue to change as time passes.
- The crash site is marked by a boulder, and the former debris field is visible from several points but remains closed to the public as hallowed ground.
- More than 500 volunteers offered their time and talents to the park this year, including for tree plantings and serving as ambassadors.

GETTING TO THE PARK

FROM POINTS WEST: Take the Somerset exit (110) off of the Turnpike (I-70/76) and follow signs for Route 281 North. Take Route 281 north 1.7 miles to U.S. Route 219 North. Travel 8.7 miles north on U.S. 219 to the Stoystown/Jennerstown/U.S. 30 exit. Turn right on U.S. 30 East. Travel 8.5 miles on U.S. 30 East. Turn right into the park entrance.

FROM POINTS NORTH/WEST: Take U.S. Route 219 south to U.S. 30 East at Stoystown/Jennerstown Exit. Turn left onto Route 30 and follow directions at left.

FROM POINTS EAST: Take the Bedford exit (146) off of the Turnpike (I-70/76). At Turnpike light, turn left. Go to next light, turn left. Take Route 220 south one exit to U.S. 30 West. Follow U.S. 30 west approximately 25 miles. Turn left into the park entrance.

FROM POINTS NORTH/EAST: Take I-99/Route 220 south to Route 30 south of Bedford. Follow directions above.

– National Park Service