

Operations in the Pacific, December 1941 – September 1945

KEY: † Military Cemetery ⚡ Sea Battle



Cabanatuan American Memorial

A marble altar marks the site of the Japanese Cabanatuan Prisoner of War Camp. Approximately 20,000 American servicemen and civilians were imprisoned there from 1942 to 1945.



Guadalcanal American Memorial

It honors those American and Allied servicemen who lost their lives during the Guadalcanal Campaign of World War II (Aug. 7, 1942 to Feb. 9, 1943). Four radiating directional walls point toward major battle sites.



American Battle Monuments Commission

This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 26 American cemeteries and 31 memorials, monuments and markers in 17 countries. The Commission works to fulfill the vision of its first chairman, General of the Armies John J. Pershing. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I, promised that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds."

Manila American Cemetery and Memorial

This cemetery site is the largest administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission in the number of graves and of those Missing whose names are recorded on the walls of the memorial. The government of the Philippines granted its free use as a permanent burial ground in perpetuity without charge or taxation.

The cemetery offers free guided tours on request pending staff availability.



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For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit www.abmc.gov



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AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION

Manila American Cemetery and Memorial



Photo: The National Archives



'Time will not dim the glory of their deeds.'

- General of the Armies John J. Pershing

June 2025

OPERATIONS IN THE PACIFIC, DECEMBER 1941 – SEPTEMBER 1945

Simultaneous Japanese surprise attacks on Pearl Harbor and the Philippines led to war. Japanese forces conquered parts of Asia but were set back in the Philippine Islands. Fierce defenses by U.S. Army Forces Far East (U.S. Army, Philippine Army and Philippine Scouts) held off Japanese assaults for six months, delayed the Japanese timetable, and enabled the start of U.S. offensive operations in the Pacific.

1941

DECEMBER 7: Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor and invaded the Philippines. (Dec. 8 in the Philippines, west of the International Date Line.)

1942

APRIL 9: U.S. Forces on Bataan surrendered. The Bataan Death March began the next day. 76,000 Prisoners of War, including 12,000 Americans, made a brutal 65-mile walk to the prison camp and thousands died on the march. The death rate of POWs was extremely high. Of the nearly 30,000 Americans captured in the Philippines, more than 11,000 died in captivity.

MAY 6: Japanese took Corregidor Island. Lt.Gen. Wainwright surrendered U.S. and Philippine forces. Some eluded capture and formed guerrilla units.

MAY 6-8: Battle of the Coral Sea blocked the Japanese invasion of Port Moresby, New Guinea.

JUNE 3-6: Battle of Midway reversed the Pacific strategic situation.

AUGUST 7: U.S. Marines landing on Guadalcanal began the U.S. drive in the Solomons.

NOVEMBER 16: The Buna-Gona campaign continued the Allied drive in New Guinea.

1943

Throughout the year, many hard-fought campaigns along the north coast of New Guinea and up the Northern Solomons flank resulted in major advances towards Japan.

NOVEMBER 20: Landing by U.S. Marines on Tarawa began the U.S. Central Pacific thrust.

1944

Southwest Pacific forces under General MacArthur reached the west end of New Guinea by the end of August. Central Pacific forces under Admiral Nimitz fought through the fortified atolls of the Marshalls, Marianas, and Palau Islands. The campaigns positioned U.S. forces to invade the Philippines.

OCTOBER 20: U.S. forces returned to the Philippines, landing on Leyte.

OCTOBER 23-26: The Battles of Leyte Gulf marked the end of Japanese naval power in the Pacific.

DECEMBER 13: U.S. landings on Mindoro facilitated preparations to invade Luzon.

1945

JANUARY 9: U.S. Sixth Army landings at Lingayen Gulf began the Luzon campaign.

JANUARY 30: U.S. Army Rangers, Alamo Scouts, and guerrillas liberated Cabanatuan POW camp.

FEBRUARY 3: Battle of Manila began. The city was declared liberated on Mar. 4. More than 1,000 U.S. military and 100,000 Filipino civilians were killed during the battle. Airborne and amphibious troops recaptured Corregidor Island on Feb. 16.

FEBRUARY 19 AND APRIL 1: Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa began.

FEBRUARY 28 – JULY 4: Starting at Palawan, through the Visayan Islands to Mindanao, Eighth Army liberated the remaining islands of the Philippines.

JULY 5: Liberation of Philippines declared. More than 14,000 Americans were killed in ground combat leading to liberation.

AUGUST 6 AND 9: U.S. bombers dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

SEPTEMBER 2: Japanese representatives surrendered aboard USS Missouri (BB-63) in Tokyo Bay.

Walls of the Missing
Engraved tablets honor 36,286 missing in action who gave their lives in the service of their country, including 22 Medal of Honor recipients.



The 25 Maps
Ten-foot-high mosaic maps of varying widths are displayed inside four rooms bordering the hemicycle walls. The maps portray important campaigns during World War II in the Pacific.



The Chapel
One sculpture represents St. George, as an American warrior, fighting his enemy the dragon. Above them are the ideals for which he fought: Liberty, Justice, and Country. The second sculpture of "Columbia With Child" symbolizes the future.



The Altar
The altar is decorated with mosaic on a predominantly blue background. A tall, graceful female figure scatters flowers. Natural light shines through stone grilleworks flanking the altar.



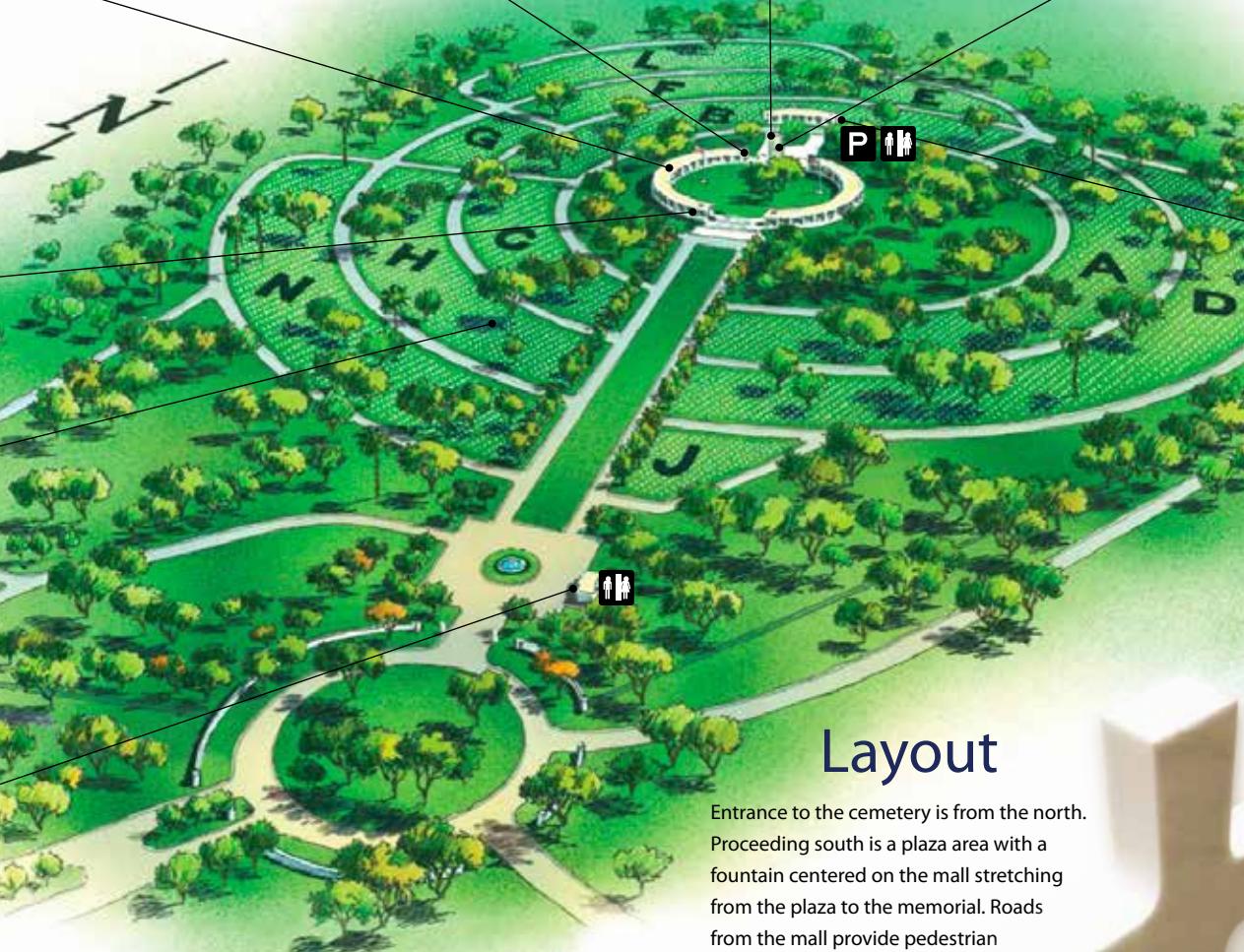
The Memorial
The memorial consists of the tower containing the small devotional chapel, and two hemicycles in front which embrace the Memorial Court. The structures are faced with travertine limestone.



The Graves
Eleven burial plots are arranged in concentric rings around the memorial and mall. The majority of the white marble headstones were quarried and fabricated in Italy and a small quantity from Romblon, Philippines.



Administration Building
Is located inside the main gate at the right of the plaza; you can meet our staff and get your questions answered, rest and refresh yourself.



Layout

Entrance to the cemetery is from the north. Proceeding south is a plaza area with a fountain centered on the mall stretching from the plaza to the memorial. Roads from the mall provide pedestrian access to all grave areas.

Headstone Location

PLOT:

ROW:

GRAVE:

Useful Information

DIMENSIONS: 152 acres
HEADSTONES: 17,113
WALLS OF THE MISSING: 36,286

LATIN CROSSES: 16,938
STARS OF DAVID: 175
WALLS OF THE MISSING: 36,286

SETS OF BROTHERS: 21
MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS: 30
DEDICATED: December 8, 1960

Gen. Douglas MacArthur returns to the Philippines, Leyte, October 1944

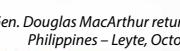


Photo: The National Archives