

LIBERTY MEMORIAL

*Historic Structure, Landscape and
Preservation Planning Report*
Kansas City, Missouri
Parks and Recreation Department

Project Data

Date: 2003/04

Size: 43 acres

Context: Downtown Kansas City



Early 1970s view looking south with Kansas City beyond. (Western Historical Manuscripts, Kansas City, MO.)

Project Description:

The purpose of the project was to research and document the Memorial's historical development, assess the existing conditions, and prepare treatment recommendations and a preservation planning report for Liberty Memorial, the only public WWI Museum in the United States. This report was needed because a major restoration was underway, which included a new museum in the architectural and structural cavities within the Memorial. Access into the below grade museum necessitated a new sloping entrance that eliminated some of the site's historic integrity immediately south of the Memorial. Our work was included into the larger report prepared by John G. Waite Associates, the lead consultant.

Architects Harold Van Buren Magonigle from New York and White and White from Kansas City, Missouri City designed and built Liberty Memorial between 1921 and 1938. Landscape Architects involved with site design included the Olmsted Brothers from Brookline, Massachusetts, and George E. Kessler and Hare and Hare both from Kansas City, Missouri. The monumental scale of this Beaux Arts Classical complex and landscape exemplify the City Beautiful movement and America's memorial architecture of the early 20th-century. It is Kansas City's most important landmark and one of our nation's most significant memorial sites. The existing limestone structure measures nearly 600' long and supports a Memorial Shaft that stand 217' above its surrounding observation deck. Fortunately, much of its historic integrity survives and this culturally significant landmark is being restored.



Liberty Memorial, July 2003 (TJE)