

“What does the Lone Sailor Statue represent to Me?”

Our History: From Our Memory to Our Hearts

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“...One Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.” These words ring out in unison, rolling off the lips of Americans every day, at ball games, assemblies, parades and other activities we enjoy—because we are free. But, this declaration is more than merely a pledge and obligation, which we must fulfill because an announcer gives the call. They tell a story, share our history, and were the basis on which this nation’s freedom was founded upon. A price was paid for us, by the noblest of men who would never know the future generations whom they fought for, or the outcome, just the belief and hope that their posterity would have the right to mutter that gracious oath is what held them steadfast to their cause. Now, we have our Pledge of Allegiance, and proclaim it proudly yet respectfully, thanking those men each and every time we do so. From the monumental Statue of Liberty majestically displayed on Ellis Island, to the copious little copper Lincoln heads we use every day—this is how Americans across the country choose to show their avid love for this country. It is our duty to thank them; out of the many different ways we can do this, monuments and memorials are some of the best physical emblems to remind us of those who have sacrificed for us and to say, “I have not forgotten”. What better way to say this in a Navy based city than by the statue of a sailor—the Lone Sailor.

The Lone Sailor Statue will bring to the heart of the city of Bremerton that personal feeling of patriotism that few other tributes can provide. Bremerton thrives off of the Shipyard, and many of the residents and families have military ties. My friends have loved ones who have served in the navy, dedicating months of their lives away from

the comforts of home, safety, family, and friends. To those individuals with family and friends in any armed forces, sacrificing for their country, the Lone Sailor offers that same personal sentiment. My grandfather was a WestPoint graduate and Korean War veteran. He was a man who knew what it meant to fight for this country and our freedom. I see so many things in the Lone Sailor, and for me one of them is my granddad. I see *my* grandfather; I see *your* uncle; I see your neighbor's cousin. I see the patriots who started us off, and the Iraq soldiers continuing their work as we speak. I also see your son or daughter, my best friend, and—maybe even—I, who will be counted upon to defend the United States of America and for the rights of our constitution to be upheld in the future.

It is these memories that we celebrate and people whom we remember and honor that enrich our nation's patriotism. My history classes teach students history and retell our past so that the youth knows the facts, but there is something that no text book can tell me or my fellow young Americans. It is a singular *feeling* of patriotism that is so essential to a country whose founding fathers have set and future leaders have raised the bar of standards so high. It is rooted deep within every heart and soul who truly cares about America's greatness. We take communion to remember Christ, we have birthdays to celebrate our own lives, and we have memorials and statues—like the Lone Sailor—to remember our fighting soldiers, and to never, ever forget that they are the ones who made it possible for us to have the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” We are the ‘land of the free’—*because* of the brave.