

# Preserving Our Veterans Heritage



Headquarters



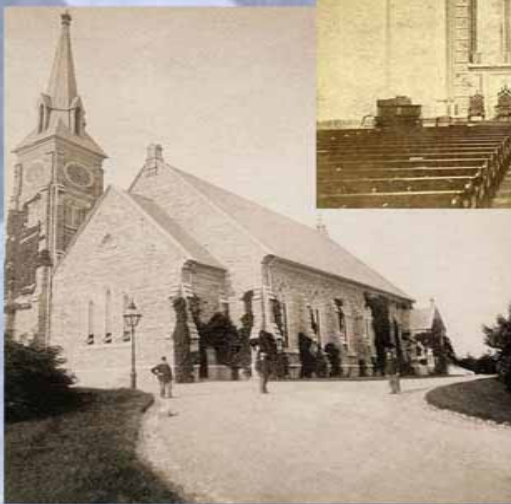
Patient Library



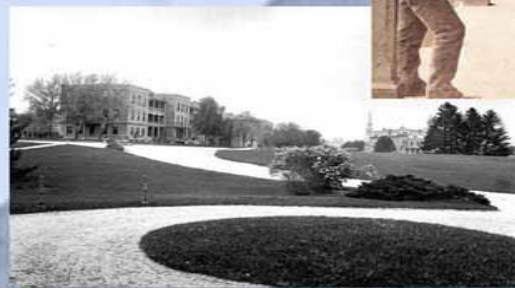
Bandstand



Chapel



Barracks

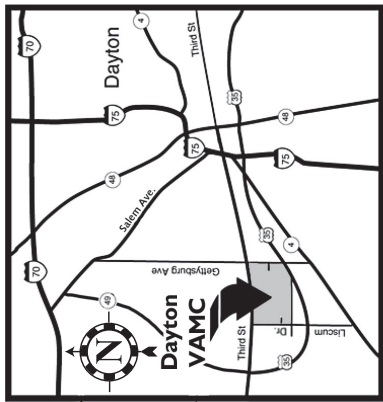


## Guide to the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center Campus

(Former Central Branch, National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers)

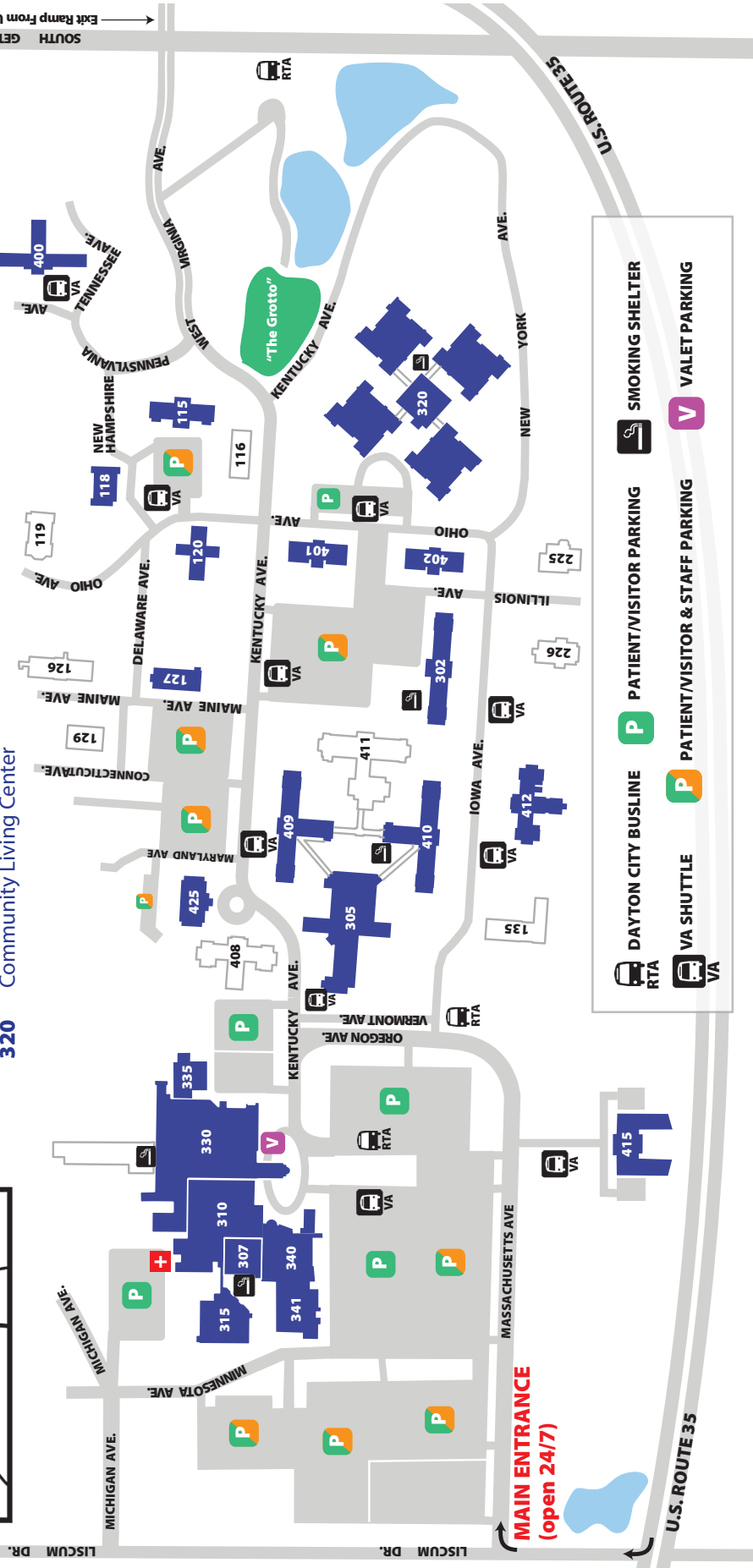


**Dayton VA Medical Center**  
 4100 W. 3rd Street  
 Dayton, OH 45428  
 (937) 268-6511



# DAYTON VA MEDICAL CENTER : MAP & DIRECTORY

NO.	BUILDING NAME	NO.	BUILDING NAME
115	Nursing Education/Psychosocial Rehabilitation & Recovery Center	330	Main Hospital
118	Protestant Chapel	335	Radiology/MRI/CT
119	Catholic Chapel	340	Primary Care East/Transition & Care Mgmt.
120	AVHC/Military Museum	341	Primary Care West/Women's Clinic
127	Police	400	Volunteers of America
302	Outpatient Mental Health	401	Child Care
305	Recreation/Voluntary Svcs/Day Air CU/ Patient Business Service	402	Miami Valley Housing
307	Prosthetics	409	Human Resources/Vocational Rehab
310	Emergency/Lab/Surgery/Eligibility	410	Domiciliary/MHRRTP
315	Simulation Center	412	Miami Valley Housing
320	Community Living Center	415	Lyons Place II
		425	Fisher House



DAYTON CITY BUSLINE  
 VA SHUTTLE  
 VA  
 PATIENT/VISITOR PARKING  
 VA SHUTTLE  
 VA  
 PATIENT/VISITOR & STAFF PARKING  
 VA  
 SMOKING SHELTER  
 VA  
 VALET PARKING

**MAIN ENTRANCE**  
 (open 24/7)

## **OUR ORIGINS**

When the Civil War ended in 1865, more than 2,500,000 men had fought in the Union Army; of those, 110,000 had been killed in action, and another 250,000 had died from disease and other causes and roughly the same number had been wounded. There were only 68 hospitals in the entire country when the war started in April 1861; the U.S. Sanitary Commission established 245 temporary hospitals, but these were closed when the war ended.

With concern for the care of the large number of disabled veterans returning from the war and with limited public and private health and social agency resources, an Act of Congress, signed by President Abraham Lincoln on March 3, 1865, established the National Military Asylum for the Relief of the Totally Disabled Officers and Men of the Volunteer Force. Initially, three facilities were established. The first was the Eastern Branch in Augusta, Maine. The second was the North Western Branch in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The third (and largest) was the Central Branch in Dayton, Ohio in 1867. These were followed by the Southern Branch in Hampton, (Fortress Monroe) Virginia; and the Western Branch in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1884.

The Dayton Asylum (the name changed to "National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers" (NHDVS) in 1873) was opened for reception of members in September 1867. 355 acres of farmland had been purchased 3 miles west of the county courthouse on high land with a good well and springs at a cost of \$55,700, of which the citizens of Dayton contributed \$20,000. Winter was approaching and hundreds of sick and disabled soldiers "homeless, penniless, and almost friendless" were applying for admission. In that first winter, 750 disabled soldiers were admitted. In 1898, there were 7,000 veterans residing at the Home, which was a peak.

The grounds were initially laid out by Chaplain Van Horn of the U.S. Army and buildings quickly erected. 3,500,000 feet of lumber from Camp Chase near Columbus was donated by the State of Ohio and used in the first buildings.

Within ten years the barren farmland had been transformed into a city with 132 buildings including a 300-bed hospital. Fifty-six of the buildings had running water, 26 had steam heat, and 50 had gas lighting. There were 6-1/2 miles of macadamized road, 2 miles of gravel walk, 15 miles of sewer and drains, 10 deep wells, and 4 lakes. Flowers and gardens abounded. A 250-acre farm supplied the produce. Most of the work had been done by the soldiers living here. At this time there were approximately 3,800 veterans in residence at the National Home, and the Central Branch served as the central depot for the entire NHDVS system.

By the turn of the century, the Soldiers Home, as it was commonly called, was a major tourist attraction. The railroad, and later electric street cars brought over 600,000 visitors a year. It was the "beauty spot of Ohio" with lush gardens, band concerts, and top name entertainment at Memorial Hall.

What would become the Dayton National Cemetery was established in 1867, with the first burials taking place in September of that year. Today the cemetery is the resting place for approximately 50,000 veterans and their family members, including 5 Medal of Honor recipients. Joshua Dunbar, father of poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar and veteran of the 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, is also buried there.

In July 1930, the Veterans Administration was created and took over the function of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. A vast renovation of the older buildings took place during the depression years. The latest buildings include an educational training facility for Wright State University School of Medicine, completed in 1982; a Clinical Building and a new domiciliary facility were completed in 1981, and the 9-story patient tower, a state of the art hospital completed in 1992.

Thanks in part to the dedicated efforts of the American Veterans Heritage Center, the campus was designated as a National Historical Landmark in October 2012.

The Soldiers Home is steeped in history and heritage – please enjoy your tour!



**The Dayton Soldiers Home as it appeared in 1872. Today, the Anderson Gate at Gettysburg Avenue is at the lower right.**

**Starting Point:** Parking area in front of Building 120, the former Putnam Library (AVHC and Miami Valley Military History Museum).

**Building 120.** The Putnam Library. Built in 1880, it originally served as the Quartermaster Building. The original design did not have the “wings” which were added in 1904. The early emphasis on books and their availability to all veteran members made the Home Library a pioneer in library services. Today it houses the American Veterans Heritage Center and the Miami Valley Military History Museum. In August 2015 it was featured in an episode of “Who Do You Think You Are?” on TLC profiling actor Bryan Cranston.



**South on Ohio Avenue – turn right on Kentucky Avenue**

On the left side of the street at the stop sign is Building 411

**Building 411 Domiciliary Dining Room.** Built in 1940. Initially consisted of 4 kitchens and 2 dining rooms seating 1,000 residents. It replaced the Grand Dining Hall Building opened December 25, 1874. This was a three-story brick building, 97 feet by 131 feet with a foundation of solid stone. It had a seating capacity of 1,100 and it was a most imposing building. It was situated due east of the current dining hall.

**Right on Maryland Avenue**

**Building 220.** Built in 1885. This is a 2-story brick building for employee housing and is currently used by the 4 Freedom Equestrian Team for equine therapy programs.

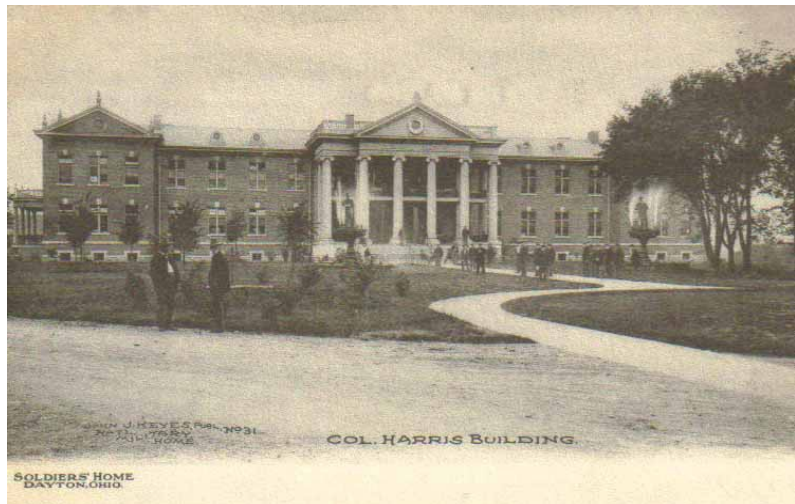
**Building 221.** Built in 1871, this was the original residence of the Home chaplain, Chaplain Earnshaw. He was the chaplain from September 1867 to his death in 1885. He was also the first librarian and cataloged the many volumes initially donated.



These buildings were demolished in the spring of 2017 to make way for a Fisher House facility.

**Right on Kentucky Avenue**

**Building 408.** This Domiciliary was built in 1903 and was named in honor of Colonel Leonard A. Harris, who was from Ohio and a member of the Board of Governors of the National Home from 1876-1890. Today it houses Human Resources offices.



**Building 305.** Recreation Building. Completed in June 1959, it replaced Memorial Hall as a recreation center. With 45,000 square feet of floor space, the auditorium seats 710 people with space for 50 wheelchairs. There are 6 bowling alleys and a variety of other recreational activities for veterans.

**Building 330.** Patient Tower. A nine level, 476 bed medical care facility constructed to replace Brown Hospital. It opened in 1992.



**South of Building 300.** The parking lot south of the Patient Towers is the site of the former Brown Hospital. Built in 1931, it replaced the Home Hospital. Prior to building the hospital, this tract of land to the west had initially been used as a farm to raise produce for the veterans. Later, it was the site of a large dairy herd producing 61,000 gallons of milk in 1908.

The hospital was named after Colonel Edwin F. Brown, Governor (today known as the Medical Center Director) of the Home from October 1868 to September 1880. He then became Inspector General of all the Branch Homes until his death in 1903. He was born in 1822 and entered the Civil War as a Lt. Colonel in the 28<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteers. He lost his left arm in the Battle of Cedar Mountain, Virginia. He was captured and sent to Libbey Prison as a P.O.W. He was later exchanged and returned to take command of his regiment. He was appointed Military Mayor of Vicksburg, Mississippi, after the war, before coming to Dayton. Colonel Brown was a marvelous leader who helped guide the transformation of this barren farmland into a self-contained “modern city”. As Governor, he entertained many visiting dignitaries including General Sherman, President Ulysses S. Grant, and President Rutherford B. Hayes on their visits to the Home.



**Left on Massachussets Avenue**

**At the stop sign, directly ahead of you is the area where the deer park was located.**

**Deer Park.** Located south and east of the officer’s residences. Fifty to sixty deer roamed this area, tended by a veteran who reputedly had been the deer keeper for the King of Prussia. The deer were so tame that they allowed themselves to be petted. In addition to the deer, there were elk and antelopes.

**Left on Iowa Avenue**

**Building 410.** Section 18 – a domiciliary (home) built in 1940. Initially built as a non-duty barracks for the more disabled, aging veterans. DVAC was the title of a radio station system whose control room was in Section 18. The radio station was broadcast over the Medical Center and there were headphones at the patient’s beds for reception of the station.

**Building 412.** A domiciliary (home) built in 1902, it was named after General William B. Franklin, a member of the Board of Managers of the Home for 22 years. This was a duty barracks and all members were expected to work. In the beginning, domiciliary veterans accomplished 95% of all jobs at the home. It is currently used by Miami Valley Housing Opportunity.



**Building 302.** This was the former Patrick Hospital. Built in 1940, it was converted to a geriatric hospital in 1950. Named after General Marsina R. Patrick, who was Governor (equivalent to today's Medical Center Director) of the Soldiers Home from 1880-1888. He was a graduate of West Point and served in the Mexican and Civil Wars.

### **Right on Illinois Avenue**

**Building 226 (“Freedom House”).** Built in 1872 as quarters for the chief officers. It is a “double” residence and was used first by the Secretary and Treasurer of the Home. Later, it became the residence of the Chief of Medicine and Chief of Surgery.

**Building 225 (“Liberty House”).** Built in 1875. This was known for years as the “Manager’s residence”. It was originally built as an amusement hall containing billiard tables, bagatelle tables, and a bowling alley. In the upper portion of the building were the quarters for the Home Band with a room for study and practice. When the club house was built in 1881, the building was converted into officer’s living quarters. It was last occupied by the Medical Center Director in 1971.

The octagonal-shaped garage to the south is said to have been home to tame monkeys at one time.

### **Right on Iowa Avenue**

### **Right on New York Avenue**

**Building 320.** The Lake Side Nursing Home was built in 1981 to offers veterans a more home-like atmosphere, in a totally handicapped-accessible building. It occupies the former parade grounds.

### **Anderson Gate**

The Board of Managers approved \$4,000 for the construction of a gateway at the Gettysburg Avenue entrance in September of 1902. The gateway was erected in 1904. In September 1905, the Board of Managers authorized that the new gateway would be called “Anderson Gateway”. General Charles M. Anderson, the gateway’s namesake, was a member of the National Home at the national level from 1894 to 1908 and simultaneously the local manager of the Central Branch. This ornamental Italian Renaissance



style structure consists of double stone pillars surmounted by eagles. Each pillar features decorative round seals, the seal of the United States, the inscription "E Pluribus Unum", and engaged Ionic columns.

Just outside the Anderson Gate once stood a white oak tree; it was approximately 90 years old when it was torn down in 1930 due to disease. Theodore Roosevelt, Warren G. Harding, and William Taft all spoke under the tree to the veterans as candidates because political speeches are not permitted on Government property.

**Lakes.** The upper lake was initially created by stone quarry activity in the early days. Lakes were deepened and widened and abounded with fish. This was the focus of the recreational area. The boat house (Building 111) was built in 1895. Swans, ducks, and geese were on the surface. "Jerry", the last surviving swan, lived for many years. It was said that if he didn't eat at the lake, he would go to the old hotel for supper. When he died in the early fifties, the Dayton newspaper did a long feature story, for he was well known.

The first laundry building was located near the southeast corner of the lakes. It was a 3 story brick building built in 1870. All washing for the Home was done there. The steam power was supplied by a 40 horse power engine with washing machines on the first floor and pressing machines on the second. All personal clothing was changed weekly.

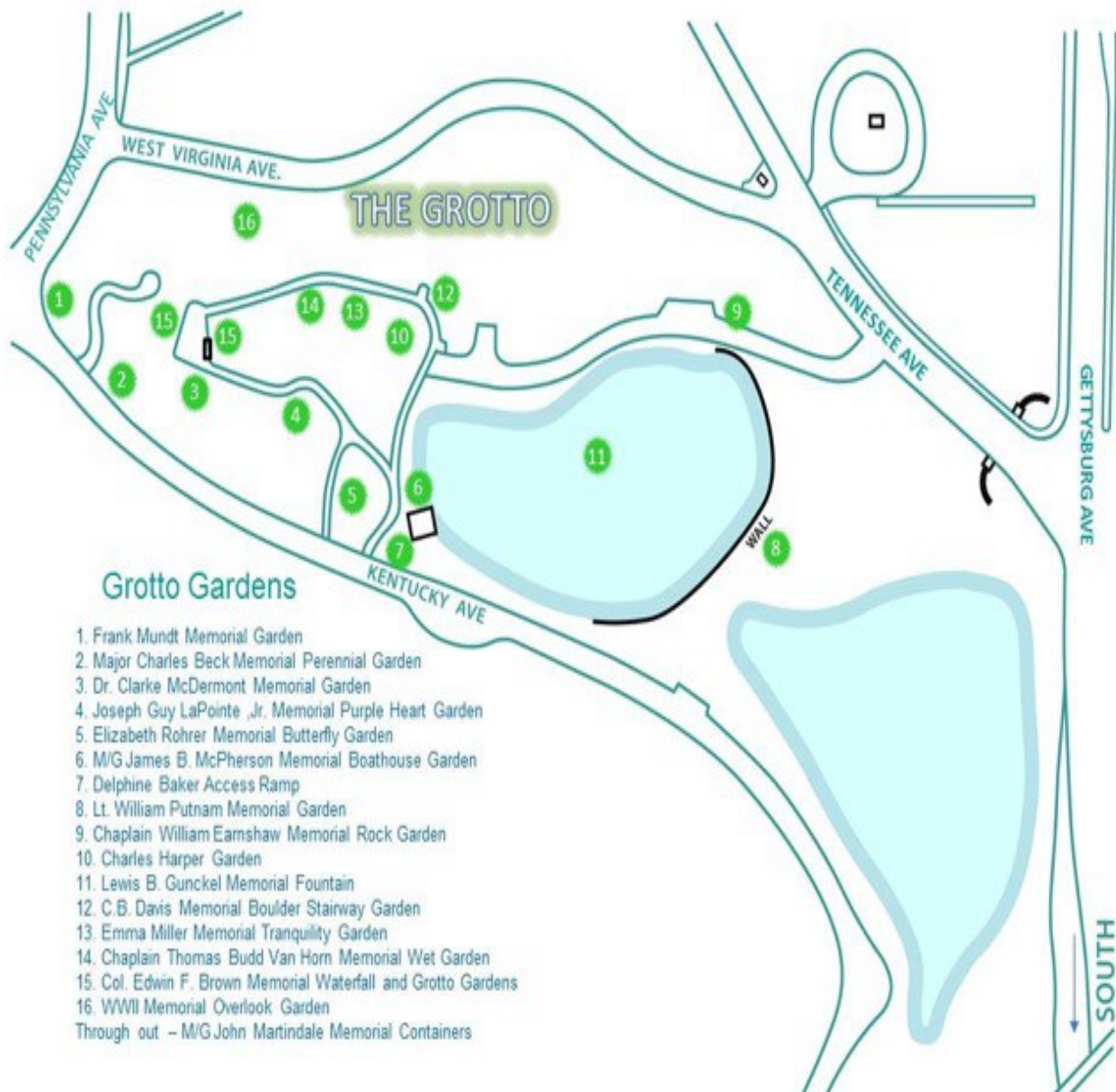
In addition, there was an ice house on the lake and also a "water works", which pumped water from the lake into some of the work houses for washing purposes.



**Grotto and springs.** The Home has always been a beautiful area thanks to the original landscaping done in 1867-1868. Frank Mundt, a veteran, had worked as a florist and gardener in Germany. It was noted "He helped transform the barren hillsides with flowers blooming from every crevice". Major Charles Beck was the Home Gardner from 1875-1906 and he continued the transformation.







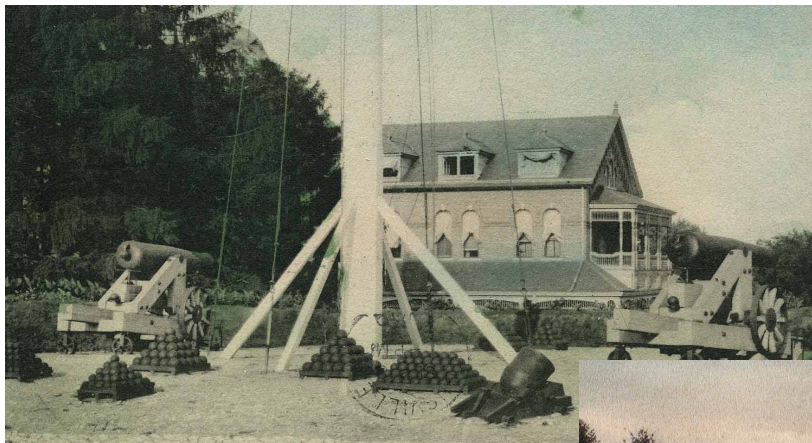
**Right on Pennsylvania Avenue**



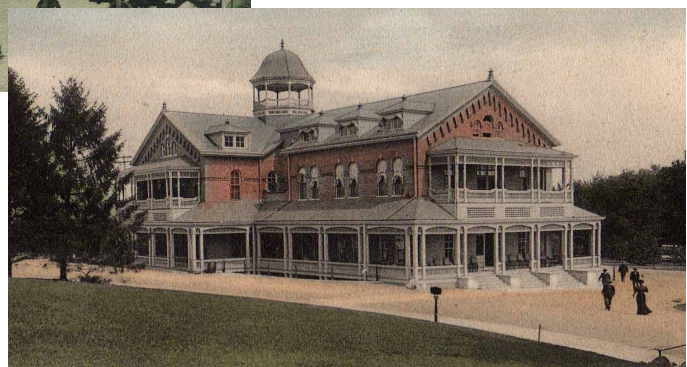
**Building 115.** The Administrative building was built in 1937 and used for the Executive, Finance, Personnel, and Special Services Department. It is currently used by Nursing Education and mental health services.

**Building 400.** The Miller Cottage was built in 1937 for female veterans. It was named in honor of Mrs. Emma L. Miller, a Civil War widow. She was active in caring for soldiers during the Civil War and helped to establish the Cleveland and Cincinnati Branches of the Sanitary Services. She was Matron of the hospital and later had charge of the hotel, the laundry, and the restaurant. For 20 years, she was superintendent of the General Depot, which supplied stores for the other Home Branches. She was the first woman to receive a commission in the U.S. Army. She died in 1914 at the age of 94, and is buried in the National Cemetery; She received full military honors at her funeral.

**Field Battery.** Once located in this area, it consisted of the flag-staff with siege guns and mortars, with pyramids of shot and shells and a battery in position, as in a battle. "From the battery are fired the salutes announcing the rising and setting of the sun." The flag pole was relocated in the renovation during the 1930's. Approximately 22,000 tons of cannon from the Soldiers Home were donated to scrap metal drives during World War II.



**Hotel.** Formerly situated just west of Miller Cottage (Building 400). Built in 1879, it was converted to a residence for female veterans in 1930 and razed in 1939.



**Buildings 210, 211, 212, 213, 214.** Built between 1921 – 1923, these buildings served as Staff Quarters and were known as “Doctor’s Row”.



***Proceed into the National Cemetery at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Ohio Avenues***

**Fountain Circle.** At the intersection of Pennsylvania and Ohio Avenues was Fountain Circle; in the middle of the circle stood the main entrance to Home Hospital. A beautiful fountain once stood in front. This was the first hospital in Montgomery County, preceding St. Elizabeth’s Hospital by 8 years and Miami Valley Hospital by 21 years. It was a great day when this 300-bed, brick hospital was dedicated in May 1870. The Governors of Ohio and Indiana were present, as were many high ranking military officers. It was the first permanent (brick) building at the soldier’s home. Home Hospital, as it was called from the beginning, was acknowledged to be the best constructed and best adapted hospital in America. It had steam heat, augmented by grates, running water, “bathrooms, urinals, water closets, etc.”, a steam-operated elevator carried patients from the basement to the third floor. Fifty-bed wards were located on each end with a patient dining room in the center section, behind the administrative offices. The hospital expanded to 450 beds by 1881 with the addition of 2 wards for epileptic and blind patients in 1875 and a psychiatric ward in 1881. Electric lights were installed in 1885.

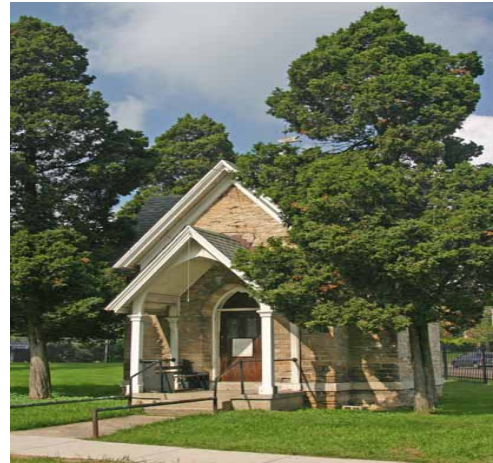
In 1870, authorization was given to employ domiciliary patients as nurses and they were paid \$8/month. Male nurses were employed from outside in 1880. In 1880, authorization for female nurses was made. Chief Nurse was paid \$350-400 per year. The nurses were paid \$12/month with lodging, board, and laundry included. This area is now part of the National Cemetery.



***Proceed on Pennsylvania Avenue into the National Cemetery to the loop at the corner of Gettysburg Avenue and Third Street***

**Guard House and Cemetery Gate**

The original entrance to the cemetery included a guard house, where visitors were greeted with a salute by one of the veterans serving as the gate guard. It was built in 1868 and today it serves as the office for the cemetery Honor Guard.



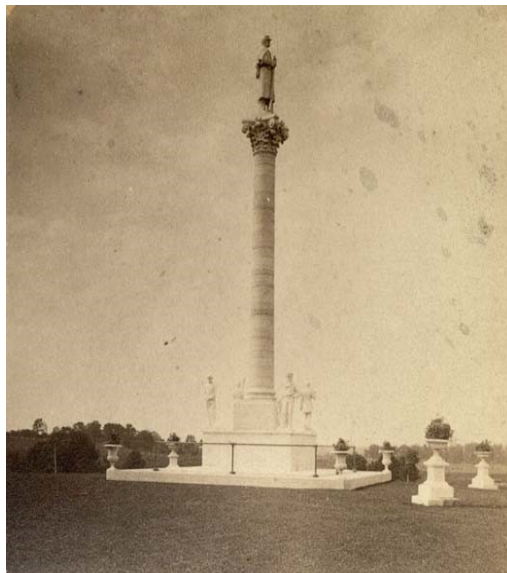
**Right on New Mexico Avenue into the National Cemetery**

The formal entrance to the cemetery is located on West Third Street. There is a network of curvilinear (east side) and orthogonal (west side) interior roads named for states that articulate and assess 31 burial sections as well as administration/maintenance buildings and two monuments. The single-most visual cemetery feature is the lofty Soldiers Monument around which are laid out faceted concentric rows of graves. Approximately 50,000 full-casket burials and more than 1,400 in-ground cremains are contained in the topography of wide, shallow rolling hills. Scattered trees and vegetation dot the scene which, besides veteran headstones, includes non-military issued grave markers and cast-metal tablets. The Dayton National Cemetery is one of 21 Veterans Administration cemeteries transferred in 1973 to what was the new Veterans Administration Cemetery System (now NCA within the Department of Veterans Affairs). The Dayton National Cemetery has been enlarged periodically with transfers of land from the VA Medical Center. In January 2014, it was one of 14 National Cemeteries designated as National Shrines.



## **Soldiers Monument:**

Atop the central mound within the cemetery stands the Soldier's Monument. The cornerstone of the Soldiers Monument was laid on July 4, 1873, and covers a time capsule containing the Bible, Construction of the United States, photographs, coins, muster-roll of officers and men of the National Home, major newspapers from ten cities, and other historical memorabilia. The Soldiers Monument is comprised of a 30-foot marble column, mounted on a granite base and crowned with an ornamental cap. "To Our Fallen Comrades" is one of the four inscriptions on the base. A Civil War Soldier at parade rest surmounts the marble column. The foot of the column is surrounded on the base by four figures representing the Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery and Navy. Benjamin Henry Latrobe designed the column, and it previously adorned the facade of the Bank of Pennsylvania. Latrobe is most noted for his work on the White House and the Capitol in Washington D.C. He is credited with introducing Greek revival as the style of American National architecture.



President Rutherford B. Hayes delivered the dedication address and unveiled the monument on September 12, 1877, with about 25,000 visitors attending the ceremonies.

The design of the National Cemetery is attributed to Chaplain (Captain) William B. Earnshaw, who was described as having "judgment and taste" in these matters. Chaplain Earnshaw served in the Army of the Potomac, then the Army of the Cumberland, from which he was named superintendent at Stones River and Nashville cemeteries. He and two other officers served on a commission charged with selecting and acquiring lands for the Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Corinth and Memphis national cemeteries. He arrived at the Soldiers' Home along with the first occupants coming from Columbus, Ohio in September 1867, having been encouraged to seek the position at the home by General George Thomas. Chaplain Earnshaw served on the staff until his death on July 17, 1885.

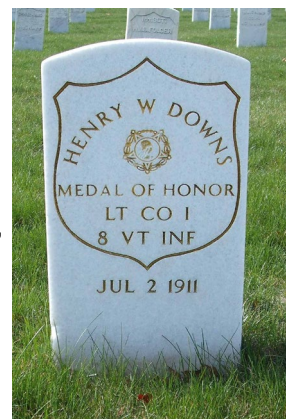
The first burial was that of the Civil War Veteran, Cornelius Solly, September 11, 1867. The last veteran of the Civil War buried here was Theodore Witte, February 13, 1947. The last veteran of the Mexican War buried here was Josiah Pence, October 9, 1914; and the last veteran of the War of 1812 buried here was Peter Miller, December 27, 1889. There are five Medal of Honor recipients buried here.

## **Notable Burials**

Marsina R. Patrick (Civilian Section, Row 3, Grave 1). A U.S. Army general during the Florida Indian War, Mexican War and Civil War, he was the fourth governor of the home, from 23 September 1880 to 27 July 1888.

Jerome B. Thomas (Civilian Section, Row 2, Grave 2). A U.S. Army colonel during the Civil War, he was the fifth governor of the home, from 17 November 1888 to 5 March 1905.

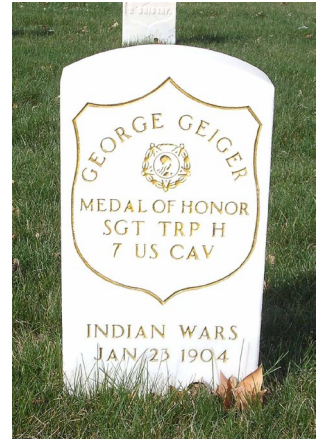
Henry W. Downs (Section Q, Row 7, Grave 24): 2nd Lieutenant, then Sergeant, Company I, 8th Vermont Infantry. Enlistment Dates: November 20, 1861-June 18, 1865. Awarded the Medal of Honor for military action at Winchester, Virginia on September 19, 1864. He and one comrade twice crossed open fields with raking enemy fire and returned with ammunition. He was born August 29, 1844 at Jamaica, Vermont and died July 2, 1911.





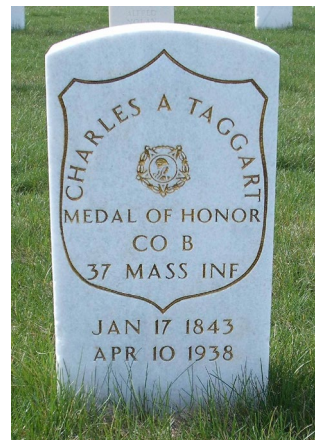
Oscar Wadsworth Field (Section O-Q, Row A, Grave 9): Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps. Enlistment Dates: August 10, 1896-August 11, 1901. Awarded the Medal of Honor for military action on board the U.S.S. Nashville during the operation of cutting the cable leading from Cienfuegos, Cuba on May 11, 1898 during the Spanish American War. Facing heavy enemy gunfire, he set an example of extraordinary courage and behavior. He was born October 6, 1873 in New Jersey and died January 5, 1912.

George Geiger (Section N, Row 20, Grave 47): Sergeant, U.S. Army. Enlistment Dates: June 15, 1861-August 11, 1865, Co. A, 47th Ohio Volunteer Infantry; November 29, 1867- November 29, 1872, Co. M, 7th Regiment, U.S. Cavalry; December 18, 1872-December 18, 1877, Co. H, 7th Regiment, U.S. Cavalry. Awarded the Medal of Honor for military action at the Battle of Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876. With three comrades he held his position and secured water for the Command. He was born in 1843 in Cincinnati, Ohio and died January 23, 1904.



John H. James (Section 1, Row 19, Grave 58): Seaman, then Captain of Top, U.S. Navy. Enlistment Dates: December 18, 1861-January 1, 1865. Awarded the Medal of Honor for action on board the U.S.S. Richmond at Mobile Bay, Alabama on August 5, 1864. During a furious two hour battle and despite heavy damage to his ship and the loss of several men, he continued to fire his gun causing heavy damage to Ft. Morgan and the subsequent surrender of the Confederate ram Tennessee. He was born February 5, 1835 in Boston, Massachusetts and died August 3, 1914.

Charles A. Taggart (Section R, Row 9, Grave 14): Private, Company B, 37th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Enlistment Dates: August 11, 1862-June 21, 1865. Awarded the Medal of Honor for capturing the enemy's flag at Saylor's Creek, Virginia on April 6, 1865. He was born January 17, 1843 in North Blandford, Massachusetts and died April 10, 1938.





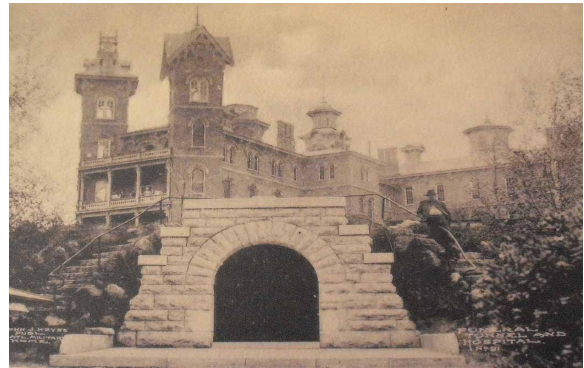
Joshua Dunbar (Section E, Row 14, Grave 8) Private, Company F, 55<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry. Father of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, world-renowned poet, author, orator.

James Hobbs (Section B, Row 13, Grave 3). Also known as “Comanche Jim”, Captain and Scout, Texas Ranger Regiment, Mexican War; and Co. E, 1st Missouri, Mounted Volunteers, Civil War. Hobbs was said to be the Great-grandson of the renowned Indian Chief, Tecumseh. He died in November 1880.



### **Left on Wisconsin Avenue**

In the hill, to the left, is a bricked wall. This is the site of the exit from the basement at the north end of Home Hospital. It was known as the “morgue exit”. The Funeral Tunnel was built in 1870. The tunnel entrance had an ornamental stone facade projecting from the ridge. Access to the cemetery from the top of the ridge was provided by stone stairs with metal railings on the north and south sides of the tunnel entrance. The tunnel is over seven feet in height. It is likely the tunnel was originally built for the Home Hospital boiler house, which set behind Home Hospital for safety purposes. The tunnel housed steam and water pipes and a small railway for transporting coal.



The pipes and railways were eventually removed and the tunnel was used to transport deceased veterans to their final resting-place. The ornamental stone facade has been removed and the entrance has been sealed with stone blocks, although the stairways and railings remain.



**Proceed to the top of the hill, and take the first road to the right, then - Left on Brown Avenue**

**Right on Wisconsin Avenue**

**Right on New Mexico Avenue**

**Right on Pennsylvania Avenue**

**Right on Ohio Avenue**

**Building 119.** Catholic Chapel of the Good Shepherd, dedicated in June 1898. Built by private donations, at one time it also served the Catholic community west of Dayton.



**Right on Delaware Avenue**

**Corner of Delaware and Maine Avenues**

**Building 129.** Built in 1881, this was originally the Veterans Clubhouse. The northern section once housed the billiard room that was overlooked by two tiers of galleries, with small rooms that were used for club purposes. Two large halls occupy the southern section of the building. The upper hall was used by veteran organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic Post #5, the Union Veteran League, and the Naval Veterans Association. The lower hall was one known as the Social Hall, and used by members for visiting, reading, writing, card playing, and chess. This room was also later used as a morgue. This building is slated to house a portion of the future VA archives and history center.



**Left on Maine Avenue**

**Left on Kentucky Avenue**

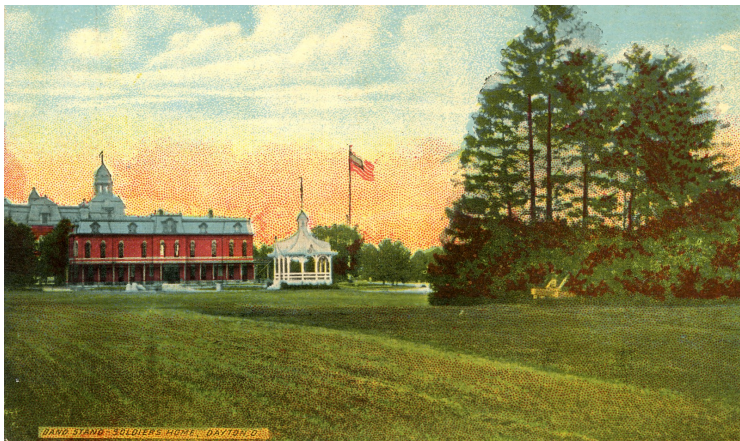


**Looking right at the corner of Kentucky and Ohio Avenues**

**Building 401.** This Domiciliary was built in 1899 and replaced the original wooden barracks built in 1867. Today, it is the Miami Valley Family Care Center for children of the residents of the community and employees of the VAMC.

**Building 402.** This Domiciliary was built in 1900 and was previously used by the U.S. Army Reserve and Volunteers of America.

**Band Stand.** Nothing is better remembered by generations of Daytonians than the band concerts. The band stand or gazebo, built in 1871, was initially lighted with gas lamps for evening concerts. The old soldiers' band started in 1870 and by 1909 was ranked second to the Marine Corp Band as the best in the country. From April to November, there were band concerts nightly. Other well known bands played here including John Phillip Sousa. The Home Band was disbanded in 1933.



**Looking left at the corner of Kentucky and Ohio Avenues**

**Building 116.** Formerly the Headquarters Building and library, this is the second oldest building on the VA grounds. Built in 1871, originally, the first floor contained offices of the Governor, the Secretary, the Adjutant, and the Treasurer. The great feature of this building was the library and reading room on the second and third floors – one of the most beautiful and complete in Ohio. Many of the books were donated by Mary Lowell Putnam in memory of her son who was killed at the Battle of Ball's Bluff in October 1861 (the library later moved to Building 120 across the street). Building 116 was later used as offices for the departments of Supply, Engineering, and the Domiciliary. Nearby is a stone memorial to the USS Maine, which includes a metal plaque made from the ship's hull.

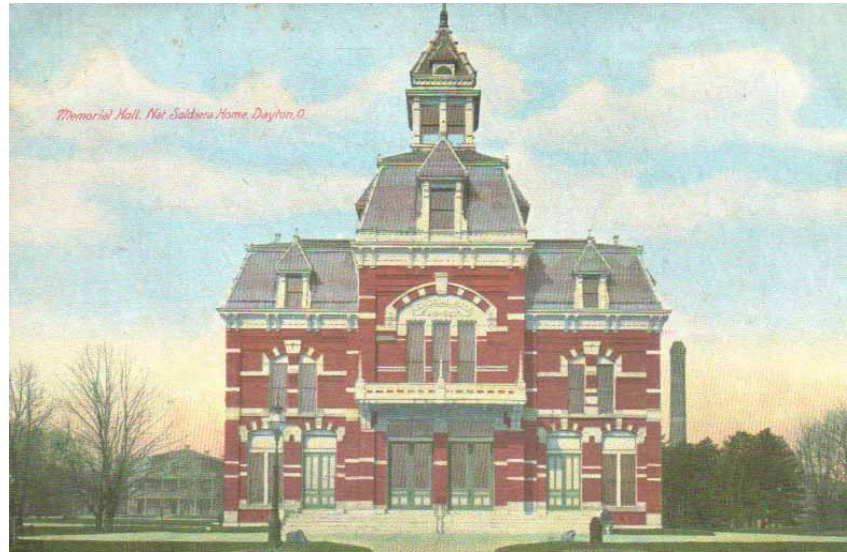


This building will house the future National VA History and Research Center.

**Left on Ohio Avenue**

**Turn right into the parking lot facing the Protestant Chapel; the parking lot is the site of the former Memorial Hall.**

**Memorial Hall.** In the area due west of Building 115 (in the parking lot) once stood the magnificent Memorial Hall. It had seating for an audience of 1,600. It was the center of amusement life, not only of the veterans, but of Dayton. Opera and stage companies, bands and orchestras performed here. Sarah Bernhardt and Fanny Brice performed there. Built in 1881, it was razed in 1956 when it was declared unsafe.



**Building 118. Home Chapel.** The Protestant chapel was dedicated in October 1870. This is the oldest building on the Medical Center grounds and was said to be the first church built by the U.S. Government for veterans. The original name, "The National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers" is engraved in stone on the outside wall. Installation of an electric organ, the first in Montgomery County, was a major event in 1896. Catholic services were also held in Home Chapel during the early years until the Catholic Chapel was built and this provided a unique experience of worship in harmony in the same church. The chapel was refurbished in 2012.



**End of tour**

We hope you have enjoyed this tour of our historic campus! Information for this guide was compiled by the Nurses Organization of the V.A. (NOVA), the American Veterans Heritage Center, the Miami Valley Military History Museum, Robert (Bob) Makley, and various original source documents.

## **American Veterans Heritage Center (AVHC)**

Office phone: (937) 267-7628 / (937) 267-7629

Physical address:

Building 120 (Putnam Library)  
120 Ohio Avenue  
Dayton, OH 45428

Mailing address:

AVHC  
P.O. Box 1366  
Fairborn, OH 45324

The AVHC and Miami Valley Military History Museum are open Monday through Friday 9AM–3PM, as well as the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month, all patriotic holidays, or by appointment.

### **The American Veterans Heritage Center**

[americanveteransheritage.org](http://americanveteransheritage.org)

[facebook.com/groups/AmericanVeteransHeritageCenter](https://facebook.com/groups/AmericanVeteransHeritageCenter)

### **The Miami Valley Military History Museum**

[mvmhm.com](http://mvmhm.com)

[facebook.com/mvmhm](https://facebook.com/mvmhm)

### **The Grotto**

[daytongrottogardens.org](http://daytongrottogardens.org)

[facebook.com/VAGrotto](https://facebook.com/VAGrotto)

### **Dayton VA Medical Center Virtual Museum**

[dayton.va.gov/museum/index.asp](http://dayton.va.gov/museum/index.asp)

### **The Dayton National Cemetery**

[cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/dayton.asp](http://cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/dayton.asp)

