

Medal of Honor Walking Tour



There are 396 Medal of Honor recipients buried or memorialized at Arlington National Cemetery. Four of which are unknowns, six are memorialized, and four are double medal recipients.

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
1.	Donovan, William J.	2-4874	USA	World War I
<p>Lieutenant Colonel, US Army, 165th Infantry, 42d Division. For actions near Landres-et-St, Georges, France 14-15 October 1918. Colonel Donovan personally led the assaulting wave in an attack upon a very strongly organized position. With his troops suffering heavy casualties, he encouraged them by his example, moving among his men in exposed positions, reorganizing the decimated platoons and accompanied them forward during the attacks. He was wounded in the leg by machine gun bullets, and refused to be evacuated and continued with his unit until it withdrew to a less exposed position.</p> <p>During World War II General Donovan would head the Office of Strategic Services, a forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency. General Donovan's headstone was the first of the special Medal of Honor Stones erected in Arlington National Cemetery in 1976.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
2.	Watters, Charles J.	2-E-186-A	USA	Vietnam (Chaplain)
<p>Chaplain (Major), US Army, 173d Airborne Brigade for actions near Dak To Province, Republic of Vietnam, 19 November, 1967. Chaplain Watters distinguished himself during an assault, moving with a company when it engaged a heavily armed enemy battalion. As the battle raged and casualties mounted, Chaplain Watters, with complete disregard for his own safety rushed forward. Chaplain Watters gave aid to the wounded and assisted in their evacuation, giving words of encouragement and administering last rites to the dying. Chaplain Watters continued to give aid and recover wounded soldiers, leaving the relative safety of the perimeter three times. Chaplain Watters was giving aid to the wounded when he himself was mortally wounded. Chaplain Watters is one of four Chaplains to receive our nation's highest award for military valor.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
3.	Basilone, John	12-384	USMC	World War II
<p>For extraordinary heroism and conspicuous gallantry in action against Japanese Forces, above and beyond the call of duty, while serving with the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division, in the Lunga Area, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, on 24 and 25 October 1942. While the enemy was hammering at the Marines defensive positions, Sgt Basilone, in charge of 2 sections of heavy machine guns, fought valiantly to check the savage and determined attack. In a fierce frontal attack with the Japanese blasting his guns with grenades and mortar fire, one of Sgt Basilone's sections, with its gun crews, was put out of action, leaving only 2 men able to carry on. Moving and extra gun into position, he placed it in action, then under continual fire, repaired another and personally manned it, gallantly holding his line until replacements arrived. A little later, with ammunition critically low and the supply lines cut off, Sgt Basilone, at great risk of his life and in the face of continued enemy attack, battled his way through hostile fire with urgently needed shells for his gunners, thereby contributing in large measure to the virtual annihilation of a Japanese Regiment. His great personal valor and courageous initiative were in keeping with the highest traditions of the US Naval Service.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
4.	Burke, Lloyd L.	7-A-155	USA	Korean War
<p>First Lieutenant, Company G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, US Army, near Chong-dong, Korea, 28 October, 1950. 1st Lt. Burke distinguished himself above and beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy. Intense enemy fire pinned down the leading elements of his company committed to securing the commanding ground when 1st Lt Burke left the command post to rally and urge the men to follow him toward 3 bunkers impeding the advance. Moving to an exposed vantage point, he threw several grenades at the bunker, then returning for an M1 rifle and adapter, he made a lone assault wiping out the position and killing the crew. Closing on the center bunker he lobbed grenades thru the opening and with a pistol killed 3 of its occupants attempting to surround him. Ordering his men forward he charged the third bunker, catching several grenades and hurled them back at the enemy. Inspired by his display of valor his men stormed forward and overran the hostile positions, but were again pinned down by increasing enemy fire. Securing a light machinegun and 3 boxes of ammunition, 1st Lt Burke dashed thru the impact area to an open knoll, set up his gun and poured crippling fire into the ranks of the enemy, killing approximately 75. Although wounded, he continued to lead his men forward, killing some 25 more of the retreating enemy.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
5.	Davis, Charles W.	7A-170	USA	World War II
<p>Major, 25th Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division, US Army, for actions at Guadalcanal Island, 12 January, 1943. Major Davis, (then Captain), executive officer of an infantry battalion, volunteered to carry instructions to the leading companies of his battalion which had been caught in crossfire from Japanese machineguns. With complete disregard for his own safety, he made his way to the trapped units, delivered the instructions, supervised their execution, and remained overnight in the exposed position. On the following day Major Davis again volunteered to lead an assault on the Japanese positions. When his rifle jammed at its first shot, he drew his pistol, and waving his men on, led the assault over the top of a hill. Electrified by his actions another body of soldiers followed and seized the hill. The capture of this position broke the Japanese resistance and the battalion was then able to proceed and secure the Corps objective.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
6.	Boyington, Gregory "Pappy"	7A-150	USMC	WWII
<p>Major, US Marine Corps Reserve, Marine Squadron 214, for actions at Central Solomons area, from 12 September 1943 – 31 January 1944. For extraordinary heroism and valiant devotion to duty as Commanding Officer, Marine Fighting Squadron 214 in action against enemy Japanese forces. Consistently outnumbered throughout successive hazardous flights over heavily defended hostile territory, Major Boyington struck at the enemy with daring and courageous persistence, leading his squadron into combat with devastating results to Japanese shipping, shore installations, and aerial forces. Resolute in his efforts to inflict crippling damage on the enemy, Major Boyington led a formation of 24 fighters over Kayhili on 17 October 1943 and circling the field where 60 hostile aircraft were grounded, boldly challenged the Japanese to send up the planes. Under his command, our fighters shot down 20 enemy aircraft in the ensuing action without the loss of a single plane. Major Boyington personally shot down 26 of the many Japanese aircraft destroyed by his squadron.</p> <p>Major Boyington's actions, and those of his squadron, were depicted in the television series "Bah Bah, Black Sheep."</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
7.	Doolittle, James H., General	7A-110	USAAC	WWII
<p>Brigadier General , US Army Air Corps. For actions over Japan 9 June, 1942. For Conspicuous leadership above and beyond the call of duty, involving personal valor and intrepidity at an extreme hazard to life. With the apparent certainty of being forced to land in enemy territory or to perish at sea, General Doolittle personally led a squadron of Army B-25 bombers, manned by volunteer crews, in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland. The launching of the B-25 aircraft off the USS ENTERPRISE, was the first time these large aircraft were deployed by an aircraft carrier.</p> <p>The Doolittle raid was immortalized in the movie "30 Seconds over Tokyo".</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
8.	Unknown American Soldier, Tomb of the Unknowns	TUS	USA	WWI, WWII, Korean War
<p>The American Unknowns interred in The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier were each awarded the Medal of Honor. The Unknown from World War I was awarded when the President Harding signed a bill authorizing the presentation on August 24, 1921. The Medal of Honor was to the Unknown American of World War II by Act of Congress approved March 9, 1948, and to the Unknown American of the Korean Conflict by Act of Congress approved August 31, 1957.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
9.	Frazer, Hugh C.	46-282	USN	Vera Cruz
<p>Ensign, U. S. Navy, at Vera Cruz, Mexico, 22 April, 1914. For extraordinary heroism, in battle, engagement of Vera Cruz. During this engagement, Ensign Frazer ran forward to rescue a wounded man, exposing himself to hostile fire and that of his own men. Having accomplished the mission, he returned at once to his position in line.</p>				

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
10.	Murphy, Audie Leon	46-366-11	USA	World War II
<p>Second Lieutenant, U.S. Army, Company B, 15th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division, Near Holtzwihr, France, 26 January 1945. Lieutenant Murphy commanded Company B, which was attacked by 6 tanks and waves of infantry. 2d Lt Murphy ordered men to withdraw to prepared positions in the woods, while he remained forward at his command post and continued to give fire directions to the artillery by telephone. Behind him, to his right, 1 of our tank destroyers received a direct hit and began to burn. Its crew withdrew to the woods. 2d Lt Murphy continued to direct artillery fire which killed large numbers of the advancing enemy infantry. With the enemy tanks abreast of his position, 2d Lt Murphy climbed on the burning tank destroyer, which was in danger of blowing up at any moment, and employed its .50 caliber machine gun against the enemy. He was alone and exposed to German fire from three sides, but his deadly fire killed dozens of Germans and caused their infantry attack to waver. The enemy tanks, losing infantry support, began to fall back. For an hour the German tried every weapon available to eliminate 2d Lt Murphy, but he continued to hold his position and wiped out a squad which was trying to creep up unnoticed on his right flank. Germans reached as close as 10 yards, only to be mowed down by his fire. He received a leg wound, but ignored it and continued the singlehanded fight until his ammunition was exhausted. He then made his way to his company, refused medical attention, and organized the company in a counter attack which forced the Germans to withdraw. His directing of artillery fire wiped out many of the enemy: he killed or wounded about 50. 2d Lt Murphy's indomitable courage and his refusal to give an inch of ground saved his company from possible encirclement and</p>				

destruction, and enabled it to hold the woods which had been the enemy's objective.

Following World War II Audie Murphy became an actor, starring in over 45 movies, mostly westerns. He suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), in his day called "Battle Fatigue", and publically spoke out for the US Government to extend health care benefits to address PTSD health problems of returning war veterans.

Murphy's headstone is the only government issued stone in Arlington National that does not have the special Medal of Honor stone. In 1975, when the US Government was installing these special stones in Arlington, permission was required from the next of kin to replace the existing stone. Letter of Approval were sent out, and Mrs Murphy replied that she did not want the original stone replaced. She stated Audie would not want any further recognition.

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
11.	Smith, Paul R.	MD-67	USA	Operation Iraqi Freedom

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.

Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the an armed enemy near Baghdad International Airport, Baghdad, Iraq, on 4 April 2003. On that day, Sergeant First Class Smith was engaged in the construction of a prisoner of war holding area when his Task Force was violently attacked by a company-sized enemy force. Realizing the vulnerability of over 100 fellow soldiers, Sergeant First Class Smith quickly organized a hasty defense consisting of two platoons of soldier, one Bradley Fighting Vehicle and three armored personnel carriers. As the fight developed, Sergeant First Class Smith braved hostile enemy fire to personally engage the enemy with hand grenades and anti-tank weapons, and organized the evacuation of three wounded soldiers from an armored personnel carrier struck by a rocket propelled grenade and a 60 mm mortar round. Fearing the enemy would overrun their defenses, Sergeant First Class Smith moved under withering enemy fire to man a .50 caliber machine gun mounted on a damaged armored personnel carrier. In total disregard for his own life, he maintained his exposed position in order to engage the attacking enemy force. During this action, he was mortally wounded. His courageous action helped defeat the enemy attack, and resulted in as many as 50 enemy soldiers killed, while allowing for the safe withdraw of numerous wounded soldiers. Sergeant First Class Smith's extraordinary heroism and uncommon valor are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Third Infantry, Rock of the Marne, and the United States Army.

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
12.	Izac, Edouard Victor Michel	3-4222-16	USN	World War I

Aboard German Submarine U-90 Lieutenant, U.S. Navy, Aboard German Submarine U-90 As a prisoner of war, 21 May 1918. When the USS President Lincoln was attacked and sunk by the German Submarine U-90 until the return of the submarine to Germany, when he was confined in the prison camp. During his stay on the U-90 he obtained information of the movement of the German submarines which was so important that he determined to escape with a view to making his information available to the U.S. and Allied Naval Authorities. In attempting to carry out this plan, he jumped through the window of a rapidly moving train at the imminent risk of death, not only from the nature of the act itself but from the fire of the German soldiers who were guiding him. Having been recaptured and confined, Lt. Izac made a second and successful attempt to escape, breaking his way through barbed wire fences and deliberately drawing the fire of the armed guard in the hope of permitting others to escape during the confusion. He made his way through the mountains of southwestern Germany, having only raw vegetables for food, and at the end, swam the River Rhine during the night in the immediate vicinity of German sentries.

Stop	Name	Gravesite	Branch	Period
13.	McGinnis, Ross A.	60-8544	USA	Operation Iraqi Freedom
<p>For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty: Private First Class Ross A. McGinnis distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an M2.50 caliber Machine Gunner, 1st Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, in connection with combat operations against an armed enemy in Adhamiyah, Northeast Baghdad, Iraq, on 4 December 2006. That afternoon his platoon was conducting combat control operations in an effort to reduce and control sectarian violence in the area. While Private McGinnis was manning the M2.50 caliber Machine Gun, a fragmentation grenade thrown by an insurgent fell through the gunner's hatch into the vehicle. Reacting quickly, he yelled "grenade" allowing all four members of his crew to prepare for the grenade's blast. Then, rather than leaping from the gunner's hatch to safety, Private McGinnis made the courageous decision to protect his crew. In a selfless act of bravery, in which he was mortally wounded, Private McGinnis covered the live grenade, pinning it between his body and the vehicle absorbing most of the explosion. Private McGinnis's gallant action directly saved four men from certain serious injury or death. Private First Class McGinnis' extraordinary heroism and selflessness at the cost of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.</p>				