

PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Unveils Upgrades to Mount Greylock's Veterans War Memorial Tower

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Department of Conservation and Recreation



ADAMS, MA — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced the completion of a two-

year effort to upgrade the historic Veterans War Memorial Tower at the summit of Mount Greylock. Utilizing \$2.6 million in capital and federal funding, the tower has undergone comprehensive renovations to address wear and tear from the elements and ensure that the monument dedicated to the Commonwealth's veterans is accessible and preserved for future generations of people to visit and enjoy.

"For 84 years, Mount Greylock's Veterans War Memorial Tower has served as an important tribute to brave Americans willing to sacrifice so much for our freedoms and these improvements will ensure the Tower remains respectfully intact to properly honor our veterans," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Our administration is proud to recognize and support the contributions of these brave individuals by preserving this cultural and historic resource in their memory for all residents and visitors of Western Massachusetts to enjoy."

"Massachusetts has always been proud to recognize our brave servicemen and women, and today's reopening of the Veterans War Memorial Tower located at the summit of Mount Greylock is an opportunity to showcase that admiration," said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. "We are honored this project at Mount Greylock State Reservation preserves this tremendous memorial, which will ensure that it lasts for generations to come."

In 2009, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), which manages Mount Greylock State Reservation, received a federal Scenic Byways grant worth \$800,000 to initiate the Mount Greylock Summit Improvement Plan, funding upgrades, and preservation of the Massachusetts Veterans War Memorial Tower with a focus on historic preservation, visitor comfort, and safety. The Commonwealth provided \$1.2 million in matching funds through the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and \$600,000 in capital funding from DCR, bringing the project's total investment to \$2,600,000.

"The Baker-Polito Administration is a strong supporter of our historic and cultural resources, and we are proud to prioritize upgrades to such a significant memorial dedicated to our service members and veterans," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton. "Contained within the state parks system is the living history of their service, and through these efforts we ensure that these special places are able to be appreciated by all."

"The restoration and rededication of this monument is a symbol of the commitment we have to never forget those who have given their lives in service to our great nation, and the sacrifice their families have borne," said Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Francisco Ureña. "We also take this moment to remember and honor all who have served and who are serving today."

Design for the repairs to the Veterans War Memorial Tower began in 2013, and during this process DCR and project architects discovered extensive deterioration within the interior

and exterior of the tower. Construction and repairs commenced in August 2015 and was completed in June 2017.

Tower rehabilitation work included:

- Repaired exterior masonry;
- Resealed exterior masonry joints, with dual sealant;
- Restored interior finishes, including new marble frieze panels in Memorial Chamber;
- Repaired fan ventilation system;
- Installed dehumidification system;
- Improved accessibility at the front entrance and Memorial Chamber;
- Installed LED lights inside the Memorial beacon;
- Improved pathway; and,
- Installed interpretive view panels and a bronze relief panel at ground level.

“The Department of Conservation and Recreation continues to preserve the state’s historic treasures, and I thank the agency’s tremendous team of planners and partners who made today’s announcement possible,” said DCR Commissioner Leo Roy. “The Veterans War Memorial Tower restoration project is an excellent example of the Baker-Polito Administration’s support for and recognition of our service members, and we will continue to ensure that their sacrifices are retold year-round through state facilities, exhibits, and interpretive programming.”

“This is a tremendous demonstration of the appreciation and respect we have for our Veterans,” said State Senator Adam G. Hinds (D- Pittsfield). “It is fitting that the Memorial is located on the Commonwealth’s highest peak. Now, all who drive by the beacon on the hill, which is now more visible than ever, will be reminded of those who have served their nation bravely.”

For over 80 years, the Mount Greylock Veterans War Memorial Tower has been the Commonwealth’s official war memorial and serves as a tribute to the men and women of Massachusetts who have served in all wars, foreign and domestic. Between 1931 and 1932, the tower was constructed with Quincy granite and was designed with a public observation level offering expansive views across three states. A memorial beacon in the uppermost globe was installed to shine its light into the night sky as a tribute to fallen and deceased soldiers and was re-lit on Veterans Day 2016. The tower was originally dedicated before a crowd of 1,200 people 84 years ago on June 30, 1933.

Mount Greylock State Reservation was created on June 20, 1893 as the first acquisition for the Commonwealth’s park system. The Mount Greylock Summit is the highest point within the Commonwealth at 3,194 feet, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Department of Conservation & Recreation

DCR manages state parks, overseeing more than 450,000 acres throughout Massachusetts. It protects, promotes, and enhances the state's natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

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