

General Douglas MacArthur

To the left of the Eisenhower statue and memorial is a memorial to General Douglas MacArthur, a 5 star General and commander of the Pacific forces in WW 2

Douglas MacArthur was born at the Little Rock Army Barracks in Arkansas, where he began his life of discipline with the United States Army. His parents were Civil War hero Lt. General Arthur MacArthur and Mary Pinkney Hardy MacArthur. Douglas would grow up to be a highly intelligent, heroic, egotistical and controversial five-star general.

Young Douglas soon learned that a MacArthur must first become a scholar and gentleman. At the age of six, Douglas transferred with his family to Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, then three years later to Washington, D.C., where his father, Captain MacArthur took a post in the War Department.

MacArthur began his education at the West Texas Military Academy in 1893, and gained many valuable intellectual skills. He received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1898. After four years, Douglas finished at West Point first in his 93-person class.

In 1904, MacArthur was promoted to first lieutenant for excellence achieved while working in the Philippines with the Army Corps of Engineers. Because of his service there, he soon found himself touring Asia with his father.

World War I

MacArthur commanded the 42nd "Rainbow" Division on the Western Front of France. He put together the 42nd Division by accumulating National Guard Units before the war. He and his men fought with determined loyalty and courage, gaining a sense of superior fighting prowess.

MacArthur became the most decorated American soldier of the war. His mission successfully completed, and after sustaining two combat wounds, MacArthur earned 13 decorations and was cited seven additional times for bravery.

In August 1918, upon his promotion to brigadier general (the youngest ever in the army) MacArthur became the commander of the 84th Infantry Brigade. Three months later, at the age of 38, he became the youngest divisional commander in France.

Following the war, MacArthur returned to West Point, becoming appointed the youngest superintendent in the institution's 117 years of existence. Over the next three years, MacArthur doubled West Point's size and modernized the academy's curriculum.

World War II

President Franklin D. Roosevelt named MacArthur commander of all U.S. Army forces in the Far East in July 1941. While preparing the U.S. military for the Philippine islands' full independence (scheduled for 1946), MacArthur would soon find out just how cunning and powerful the Japanese could be in the Pacific.

Despite General Dwight D. Eisenhower's direct assistance from Washington, MacArthur did not have the resources to build a force capable of holding off the Japanese. The attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, was the crushing point of MacArthur's army in the Philippines. His army and air force were quickly pulverized, and by January, the remainders of his men were forced onto the Bataan

Peninsula. While his forces struggled to survive, MacArthur could only watch from his command on the island of Corregidor at the mouth of Manila Bay.

In March 1942, President Roosevelt made MacArthur commander of the Allied forces in the Southwest Pacific and ordered him to go to Australia.

Under cover of night, a U.S. Navy torpedo boat spirited MacArthur and his family from Corregidor to the southern Philippines. They flew to Australia from there. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor on April 1, 1942. It was in Australia that he uttered his famous promise, "I shall return." For the next three years, Douglas MacArthur would fight for his promise.

MacArthur spent much of 1942 accumulating men and material. Late that year, he commenced his mighty offensive against the Japanese. By early 1944, his soldiers were victorious in most of New Guinea, New Britain, the Solomons, and the Admiralty Islands. On October 20, 1944, his forces invaded Leyte Island in the Philippines. He trudged ashore with his men at Leyte. By doing so, MacArthur fulfilled his promise to return. Six months later, all of the Philippines were liberated from the Japanese.

MacArthur was promoted to five-star general of the army in December 1944. In April 1945, he took command of all American army forces in the Pacific. On August 14 of that year, President Harry S. Truman announced the Japanese assent to the Allied surrender terms, and made MacArthur supreme commander of the Allied Powers.

It became MacArthur's job to receive the surrender — and to rule Japan. The Japanese surrender took place aboard the battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945.

The Korean War and the general's finale

The Korean War began in 1950. After North Korean Communists invaded South Korea in 1950, MacArthur was appointed the Supreme United Nations commander. After the Chinese Communists entered the war on the side of the North Koreans, MacArthur wanted to attack the Chinese mainland.

His enthusiasm for pushing on and attacking areas of China was not shared by President Truman. On April 11, 1951, MacArthur was relieved of his command by the president. MacArthur, always straightforward with his opinions, had publicly disagreed with Washington's campaign strategies, which in the American system of government, military leaders are not permitted to do.

General Matthew B. Ridgway replaced MacArthur and stabilized the military situation near the 38th parallel.

After nursing thoughts of a run at the White House, MacArthur finally gave up on the idea in 1952. New York was home for MacArthur's remaining 12 years of life, where he analyzed and wrote on many public issues. He passed away at Walter Reed Army Hospital on April 14, 1964, at the age of 84.