

A Brief History of the War Memorial (Monument Park)

Memorial Day, 1924, saw the dedication of the Memorial Tablet erected in honor of Wilton's veterans who served in all wars, from the Revolution to the recent World War. The day started with a parade led by Joseph S. Buckley as Marshall, and included the Nashua City Band, members of the American Legion and other orders, and Wilton's teachers and schoolchildren. They marched down Main Street and wound their way up Russell Street to Maple to Prince to Livermore to Park to Maple to Prince and back to Main Street where they paused by the Boston and Main Railroad Station to greet the speaker for the dedication ceremony, Col. William Sullivan of Nashua. They escorted him along Main Street, pausing by the cannon on the Common (now Cooley Park) where a wreath was laid. The march continued on to Whiting Pond (site of the police station and parking lot today) where a service for the sailor dead was conducted, concluding with the strewing of flowers into the water by the schoolchildren.

The unveiling of the new monument followed. Two Civil War veterans were present, Major D.E. Proctor and Henry L. Emerson, as well as squads from the American Legion and delegations from other orders who surrounded the Memorial Tablet during the ceremony. The Colonel delivered a stirring speech although a high wind, on an otherwise fine day, prevented the crowd of disappointed onlookers from hearing what he had to say. Afterward, the schoolchildren sang and, finally, the venerable Major Proctor called for three cheers which resounded with a will. Marchers then fanned out to the town's cemeteries where the graves of the fallen were decorated.

In 1949, a rededication ceremony was held when a plaque for the veterans of World War II was attached. Separate monuments have been added for more recent conflicts, including the most recent -- an Eagle Scout project, by Jonathan Schultz, for the post-Vietnam era up to 9/11.