

newyork

Statue of Liberty

National Monument

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Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,

With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame

Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name

Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand

Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command

The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she

With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

—EMMA LAZARUS, 1883



The Statue of Liberty was conceived as a memorial to a great international friendship; it came, however, to have a much broader significance. To the world, it is a symbol of those ideals of human liberty upon which the United States and its government are founded. Millions of immigrants who crossed the ocean in search of greater freedom and opportunity have been greeted by this colossal statue.

In 1865 French historian Edouard de Laboulaye proposed that a memorial be built to mark the alliance of France and the United States during the American Revolution. It was to be a joint undertaking by both countries, and a young Alsatian sculptor, Frederick Auguste Bartholdi, was sent to America to study and discuss the project with friends there.

After his arrival in the United States, Bartholdi conceived of a gigantic statue standing in New York Harbor, at the gateway to the New World, representing not only the friendship of two nations but a common heritage—liberty. Bartholdi's conception of the international memorial was adopted in 1874 and committees to begin the project were organized in both countries. It was agreed that the French people would finance the building of the statue and the American people would provide the pedestal upon which it would stand.

The response of the people of France was quick and warm, and a campaign to raise the necessary funds was launched with public entertainments. The cost of the statue was greater than anticipated, but by the end of 1879 the required amount—\$250,000—had been collected. All of it was contributed by popular subscription, and governmental assistance was not required.

As soon as his plan had been approved, Bartholdi began working on the designs of the statue in his Paris studio. The mechanics of enlarging his 9-foot "working model" to its present scale tested the sculptor's ingenuity. The plaster model was first reproduced four times its original size, then, section by section, enlarged to its existing height of 152 feet.

By the summer of 1884, when all the pieces of the statue had been put together, it stood a veritable colossus overlooking the Paris rooftops. On July 4, 1884, the completed statue was formally presented to the United States. The next year it was taken apart and crated for shipment to New York City.

The American efforts to raise funds for building the pedestal were hampered by public apathy. Bedloe's Island (now Liberty Island) in New York Harbor was selected for its placement, but the estimated cost of \$150,000 fell far short of the actual funds required. Work on the pedestal stopped completely in the autumn of 1884 with only 15 feet of the structure completed and all funds exhausted. An additional \$100,000 was needed before construction could continue, but the public was reluctant to contribute further to the project.

In March 1885, the *New York World*, which had earlier undertaken to popularize the pedestal campaign, renewed its crusade for contributions. In daily editorials Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the *World* and himself an immigrant, assailed public indifference and urged benefit performances, sporting events, and entertainments for the necessary funds. Pulitzer's efforts were so successful that, in less than 5 months, the money was raised. The pedestal was completed on April 22, 1886.

On October 28, 1886, the "Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World" was dedicated with impressive ceremonies in which dignitaries of both countries participated. President Grover Cleveland, in accepting the monument on behalf of the people of the United States, solemnly promised that "We will not forget that Liberty has here made her home; nor shall her chosen altar be neglected." That promise has been kept.

Through the years this bright symbol of liberty and freedom has been under the care of the Lighthouse Board, the War Department, and the National Park Service. In 1924 the Statue of Liberty was declared a National Monument. In 1956 Congress changed the island's name to Liberty Island, in recognition of the statue's symbolic significance and of the plan to establish at its base the American Museum of Immigration, honoring those who chose these shores as their home. In 1965, nearby Ellis Island, the clearinghouse for million of immigrants to the United States, was added to the monument by Presidential proclamation.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT: Statue of Liberty National Monument is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. When daylight-saving time is in effect, visiting hours are extended to 6 p.m. The ferry to Liberty Island leaves Battery Park, at the lower tip of Manhattan Island, every hour on the hour, with half-hour schedules in effect in summer. You can reach the ferry by using the Broadway bus or the IRT and BMT subways. For your convenience, a concessioner operates a refreshment and souvenir facility on Liberty Island.

ADMINISTRATION: Statue of Liberty National Monument is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is 28 East 20th St., New York, NY 10003, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.