

National Monument to the Forefathers

The best kept secret in the country

by Keith Davis

Located on a small hilltop in Plymouth Massachusetts is the largest granite monument in the country (and believed to be the largest of its kind in the world) known as the **National Monument to the Forefathers**.

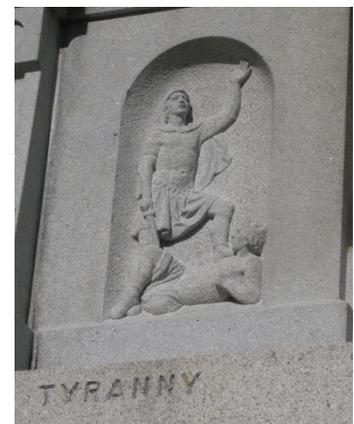
Standing 81 feet tall, the monument was conceived as a project of the Pilgrim Society in the early 1800's as a tribute to the Pilgrims' heroic journey to America. It was designed by Boston sculptor Hammatt Billings and the cornerstone was laid by the Masons before the Civil War. Billings died in 1874 and his brother and other artists refined the design and the monument was completed and dedicated in 1889.

The central figure, which is half the overall height of the monument, is "**Faith**," who is facing east, beckoning settlers to America as she holds the Geneva Bible under her left arm. Her right arm is raised to the heavens with poise reminiscent of the Statue of Liberty.



Around the base are four larger than life figures, **Liberty, Morality, Law** and **Education**, and on each side of those are two smaller reliefs. With Liberty are **Tyranny Defeated** and **Peace**; with Morality are **Prophet** and **Evangelist**; with Law are **Justice** and **Mercy**; and with Education are **Youth** and **Wisdom**.

Intricate carvings beneath each of those depict important historical events, showing the Pilgrims getting on the Mayflower, landing in America, signing the Mayflower Compact and showing education. Up two of the sides are the names of those who came on the Mayflower.



On a third side is a quotation by William Bradford, 2nd governor of the Massachusetts colony:

Thus out of small beginnings greater things have been produced by His hand that made all things of nothing and gives being to all things that are; and as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many, yea in some sort to our whole nation; let the glorious name of Jehovah have all praise.

Located on Allerton Street near downtown Plymouth, it's easy to get to and free to visit. So why is it that we are just learning about this national treasure? Many of us have been to Plymouth Rock, which, with the monument, make up the **Pilgrim Memorial State Park**. Many of us first heard about the monument from Plymouth historian Leo Martin at the Massachusetts Republican Assembly (MARA) by-laws convention on March 17th of 2012. We also saw Kirk Cameron's movie *Monumental*, commemorating the monument. A November 10th trip to the monument by many MARA members was inspiring, to say the least.

Strangely, the monument was not even listed on the Visitors page of the Plymouth town website www.plymouth-ma.gov as an attraction, and only after they were contacted did a link appear on their website. An unofficial website www.TownOfPlymouth.org has been requested to add the monument to their History and Museums area. The Mayflower Society website www.TheMayflowerSociety.com has the Mayflower II ship and Plymouth Rock featured as attractions, but doesn't mention the monument. They have been contacted about adding it to their website. One website which does mention the monument is www.SeePlymouth.com under their "Things to Do" page and then "Museums and Monuments." WWW.JenneyMuseum.org is another source of information on the monument (see last paragraph for more).

There does seem to be a conscience effort to remove all mention of the Pilgrims' religion and spiritual beliefs, especially by the Plimoth Plantation, which is also owner of the Mayflower II ship and is leasing the Jenney Grist Mill (which they call the "Plimoth Grist Mill"). **It is suggested that these attractions be avoided.**

Fortunately, Leo Martin of the Jenney House Museum is giving tours of Plymouth and the Forefathers Monument. The Jenney House Museum, located at 48 Summer Street, has a website www.JenneyMuseum.org and Leo can be contacted by email at info@jenneymuseum.org or called at 508/747-4544. Please support his wonderful efforts to educate the public on the truth behind the Pilgrims' journey to the new world and their strong belief in God. Let's help bring the Monument to the Forefathers from being the best kept secret to the most popular Plymouth attraction!