

PCC SAR Patriot Grave Marking

Patriot Grave Marking

A Patriot Grave Marking is a service conducted by the Sons of the American Revolution honoring a Patriot from the American Revolution with an unveiling of a new grave marker or lug. The service involves elements from:

- (a) A US Military funeral
- (b) A Church funeral
- (c) The traditions, wishes and customs of the Patriot's family
- (d) The traditions, wishes and customs of the organization conducting the service
- (e) The customs, wishes and traditions of the location of the grave site to include the church where the grave is located if appropriate.
- (f) The items in the SAR instruction manual

There is not one exact order for the service honoring a Patriot since the requests of all elements are considered in organizing the service.

A Patriot memorial service is a service conducted in the same manner as a Patriot Grave Marking but does not involve an unveiling of a new grave marker. It is not considered the same as a Patriot Grave Marking unless it is not possible to install a grave marker.

A Compatriot Grave Marking Service or Memorial Service is a service conducted in the same manner as a Patriot Grave Marking but is held for a fellow member of the SAR who has passed. It is not considered the same as a Patriot Grave Marking and should be documented on a separate document for Compatriot Grave Marking Medal purposes.

Individuals involved in a Grave Marking

The following are the key individuals normally involved in a Patriot Grave Marking Service:

- (a) Organizer/Commander.

This is the individual who is in charge of the service and is the overall coordinator for all individuals and organizations involved. He may be the Chapter President, the Chapter Committee Grave chair or another individual in the chapter who is in charge of the event. He is always present in a service because there must be someone who is overall responsible to plan, set up and conduct the service.

- (1) Locating the grave site of the Patriot to be honored.
- (2) Obtaining permission for the service to be conducted from the owner of the grave site.
- (3) Obtaining the proper marker(s) and have them installed prior to the service. A decision must be reached during the planning for the service on who will pay for the marker and its installation.

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- (4) Inviting the SAR participants in the service to attend and assign their tasks. Others that may be invited to attend and participate are the Boy Scouts, JROTC, veteran groups, Daughters of the American Revolution, re-enactors and others who have an interest.
 - (5) Securing the involvement of the family as appropriate and acting as liaison with the family members.
 - (6) Organizing the program and having it printed for the service.
 - (7) Developing an invitation list for the service and sending invitations to the organizations and individuals on the list. This would include, but not be limited to, local patriotic organizations and interested parties.
 - (8) Issuing pre-service and post-service publicity to the local media and appropriate SAR publications.
 - (9) Reviewing and planning for the safety issues that are involved for the location where the service is being conducted and appointing a safety officer for the service.
 - (10) Reporting the information about the Patriot's Grave to the Patriot Records Committee as required.
 - (11) Serving as the master of ceremonies for the services or appointing someone to serve in this capacity.
- (b) Chaplain or Minister
This is the individual who provides the invocation and benediction for the service.
- (c) Speaker(s)
This is the individual(s) who has a speaking part during the service. Some of the tasks that may perform include but are not limited to:
- (1) Lead the Pledge of Allegiance, the SAR Pledge, and offer welcome remarks;
 - (2) Offer remarks about the Patriot being honored; and
 - (3) Dedicate the installed marker Lead the SAR Recessional.
- (d) Flag Carriers/Color
- (e) Musician.
This is the individual(s) who sing the Star-Spangled Banner, other patriotic songs or plays music as requested by the patriot's family
- (f) Photographer
- (g) Traffic Director
- (h) Keynote speaker
This individual may be present in the ceremony and is the main speaker during the service. There should be only one Keynote speaker for a service. This person gives the main address or presentation. Other speakers or distinguished guests should limit their remarks to a very few minutes when a keynote speaker is present in the service.
- (i) Wreath Registrar. This is the individual(s) who is responsible for verifying the individuals present who will render honors and recording their presence.

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Order of Service for a Grave Marking

- (a) Call to Order
- (b) Presentation of Colors
- (c) Invocation by Chaplain or Minister
- (d) Pledge of Allegiance to United States flag
- (e) SAR Pledge by SAR Members
- (f) Welcome and Introduction to SAR
- (g) Introduction of Dignitaries and Participants
- (h) Remarks
- (i) Introduction of Patriot's descendants present
- (j) Dedication of SAR Grave Marker (Unveiling of the marker)
- (k) Presentation of Wreaths at Grave Site (Rendering Honors)
- (l) SAR Recessional by SAR Members
- (m) Benediction by Chaplain or Minister
- (n) Retirement of Colors

Markers used for a Grave Marking

The following are examples of Patriot Grave Markers and suggestions on their installation:

(a) Patriot Bronze Marker

(1) Installed on a headstone.

SKU 0601L ~ 8-in. diameter

This is a marker (called a large lug) that is constructed to be installed on a grave marker or headstone. It is available in a regular size and a small size from the SAR store. The large size is the same size as a Patriot Bronze Marker that is installed in the ground on a medal stake and is most often used on an upright headstone. The smaller marker is most often used on a flat grave marker. The marker should be installed by a monument company that is familiar with the process. The marker should not be installed on very old headstones as they are usually not strong enough to take the installation.

There is also a small lug available

SKU 0601C. ~8-in. diameter



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(2) Installed in the ground.

SKU 0601S ~7-in. diameter

This is a Patriot Bronze Grave Marker that consists of a metal stake, a bronze marker and screws to attach the marker to the stake. To install the marker, a hole is dug in the ground and cement is placed in the hole then the metal stake is placed in the cement. The cement is allowed to dry overnight then the bronze marker is placed on the metal stake using the screws provided in the kit. The stake is normally installed next to the headstone. The marker is often not used today due to bronze metal being stolen from cemeteries and the difficulty of mowing around the stake.



(b) Patriot Marble/Granite Marker - Installed in the ground. This is a marble/granite marker that is available from a third party that is installed in the ground by the existing headstone. A hole is dug in the ground, cement is poured in and the marble is set into the cement. This marker is more common today because it allows for easier maintenance by grounds keeping and it is not often stolen.

(c) Compatriot (Member) Bronze Grave Marker

(1) Installed on a headstone.

SKU 0602L ~6-in. diameter

This bronze marker (a lug) is available from the SAR store and is designed to be installed on a headstone or marker. It is installed the same as a Patriot Grave Marker and should be done by a monument company.



(2) Installed in the ground.

SKU 0602S ~6-in diameter

This marker is available from the SAR store and is installed in the same manner as a Patriot Bronze marker.



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(3) Installed on a Cremation Vessel.

SKU 603C ~ 3-in. diameter

This bronze marker is available from the SAR store and is designed to be installed on a crematoria vessel by the funeral company. This marker can also be installed on a flat marker for Memorial parks for a compatriot.



(d) Compatriot marble/granite marker-Installed in the ground. This marker is available from a third party and is designed to be installed in the ground by the headstone or grave marker. A hole is dug and cement is poured in and the marble marker is placed in the cement. This marker is most often used today because it allows easier grounds keeping.

Approach when the grave site is not known for a patriot

Examples when the grave site of a patriot is not known would be:

- Burial at sea,
- Location has been lost due to time,
- Individual was buried on the battlefield in a mass grave or in an unmarked grave, and
- Patriot was buried in an unmarked grave.

These are the suggested approaches to follow when a grave site is not known.

- Approach a nearby church with a cemetery and request permission for a marker to be installed in an unused portion of the cemetery.
- Conduct the service at this location and note that this marker is installed here but the actual grave site is not known. A marker may or may not be installed depending on whether it is practical and desired, and permission can be obtained.
- Conduct the service in a local cemetery and note during the service that the patriot was buried at sea or the specific grave site is unknown. The service could be conducted in the Patriot's family church if that is desired by the family. A marker may or may not be installed depending on the desires of the family.
- Cemetery is known where the Patriot was buried but the location of the grave site has been lost., then the service is conducted as noted above. A marker may be placed somewhere in the cemetery or the service may be conducted, and a marker not installed.

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Approach when a Patriot Grave Marker is not installed

Examples where a grave marker might not be installed for a service:

- (a) When the Patriot's grave is constructed such that it is impractical for a marker to be installed. This could be due to the amount of cement around the grave site which precludes either a bronze or stone marker installation.
- (b) When the current headstone is fragile and the installation of a bronze marker on the headstone is not practical and the installation of a marble marker is not permitted.
- (c) When the rules of the cemetery do not allow a marker to be installed.

When this situation happens, the service is conducted as outlined above and no mention is made of the installed marker in the service.

Approach when all the graves in a cemetery are dedicated

Sometimes a decision is made to dedicate all the Revolutionary War graves in a cemetery in a single service. Normally in this situation one marker (or monument) is installed that lists all the Patriots that are buried in the cemetery. This monument would also contain the SAR Patriot Grave marker. In this situation, the service would be conducted as outlined above and the names of all the Patriots that are being honored would be noted in the service and the program. The single marker(monument) would be dedicated rather than individual markers at each grave site. Often the marker is a monument that lists the individual names of the Patriots and has the SAR Patriot Grave marker installed on it. In the event it is not practical to install the marker at the cemetery, then it should be installed at nearby public place where the Patriots can be recognized. In some situations, the service will dedicate the cemetery and no marker will be installed. In such situations, the service will be conducted as noted above and no mention would be made of the marker. If no marker is installed when all the patriot graves in a cemetery are dedicated, then the service is not classified as a Patriot Grave Marking.