

## STATE CAPITOL SCULPTURES

The statues and monuments on the grounds of the State Capitol Building add beauty and dignity to the area while providing a glimpse of Illinois' rich history. Many of the statues immortalize famous Illinoisans, such as Abraham Lincoln, his Democrat rival Stephen Douglas and Civil War Governor Richard Yates. Other memorials pay tribute to those who have fallen in the line of duty, including Illinois firefighters and police officers.

### Abraham Lincoln

In 1913, the Illinois State Art Commission was authorized to secure a new statue of Abraham Lincoln for Illinois' centennial. The 10-foot, 6-inch bronze statue with its large granite base and backdrop stands prominently on the far east Capitol grounds along Second Street. The statue is engraved with Lincoln's "Farewell to Springfield" speech and cost about \$50,000. It was dedicated on Oct. 5, 1918, the centennial of the first meeting of the Illinois General Assembly.

Sculptor: Andrew O'Connor, 1918



### Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This 300-pound statue cost \$25,000 and was first unveiled in the Capitol rotunda on Jan. 14, 1988. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is the first non-Illinois resident to be honored with a statue. Then-Secretary of State Jim Edgar said King "merits this special recognition for his contributions to Illinoisans of all colors and creeds." In May 1993, the sculpture was moved to "Freedom Corner" at Second and Capitol Streets facing the Lincoln statue, and was rededicated on Sept. 18, 1993.

Sculptor: Geraldine McCullough, 1988



### Illinois Workers Memorial

Paid for by donations from union members, this 3,000-pound memorial "is dedicated to the memory of the thousands of Illinois workers killed and injured on the job." The bronze sculpture of three workers on top of a polished granite base stands on the north Capitol grounds. The dedication ceremony on April 28, 1992, was organized and moderated by state and national AFL-CIO and labor officials.

Sculptor: Peter Fagan, 1992





### **Pierre Menard**

The 8-foot bronze statue of Illinois' first Lieutenant Governor was the first to be placed on the Capitol lawn on May 28, 1886. A French-Canadian, Pierre Menard is depicted trading with a Native American along the Mississippi River. Charles Chouteau, the son of Menard's former business partner, donated about \$10,000 for the statue and its 10-foot granite base. The statue was dedicated on Jan. 10, 1888, and moved to its current location on the northwest Capitol lawn in 1918.

Sculptor: John H. Mahoney, 1886

### **Stephen A. Douglas**

The "Little Giant's" statue was funded through the same 1913 appropriation as the Abraham Lincoln statue and was produced for about \$25,000. Dedication of the Stephen A. Douglas statue — Lincoln's Democratic rival — took place on Oct. 5, 1918. The statue stands near the east entrance of the Capitol building. Engraved on the base of the statue is Douglas' dying message to his children: "...to obey the laws and support the Constitution of the United States."

Sculptor: Gilbert P. Riswold, 1918



### **Everett McKinley Dirksen**

This 11-foot bronze statue on the southeast Capitol lawn was commissioned by the Dirksen Memorial Commission and financed by the State of Illinois. Dirksen served Illinois for nearly 35 years as a Republican Congressman and U.S. Senator. An elephant, donkey and oil can flank his figure, symbolizing his skills in persuading Republicans and Democrats to cooperate and enact vital legislation. The monument was dedicated on Sept. 16, 1976, seven years after Dirksen's death.

Sculptor: Carl Tolpo, 1975



## Richard Yates

“The wounded soldier’s friend” is inscribed on the granite base of the statue of former Illinois Governor and U.S. Senator Richard Yates. The 8-foot bronze statue, located on the southeast Capitol lawn, was paid for by the state. During a joint dedication ceremony for the Yates and John M. Palmer statues on Oct. 16, 1923, Yates’ son, Richard, a former Governor himself, spoke about his father, whose most brilliant service was during the four tumultuous years of the Civil War.

Sculptor: Albin Polasek, 1921



## John M. Palmer

John M. Palmer began his political career as a Democrat but became an outspoken critic against slavery and helped create the Republican Party in 1856. After serving as a general in the Civil War and as Military Governor of Kentucky, he was elected Republican Governor of Illinois in 1868. On March 11, 1891, on the 154th ballot, the General Assembly elected Palmer a Democratic U.S. Senator. The Palmer statue was dedicated during a joint ceremony with the Yates statue on Oct. 16, 1923.

Sculptor: Leonard Crunelle, 1923



## The Coal Miner

At the urging of Vachel Davis, a Southern Illinois coal miner, poet and artist, then-state Representative Paul Powell introduced a bill to appropriate \$15,000 for the creation of a monument honoring Illinois coal miners. Davis worked with Tinley Park sculptor John Szaton to transform Davis’ famous painting into a 7-foot bronze statue. Located at the northeast corner of the Capitol lawn, the statue was dedicated on Oct. 16, 1964. A plaque identifying the sculptor and dedication date was added on Dec. 7, 1981.

Sculptor: John Szaton, 1964





## Illinois Police Officers Memorial

This memorial, with its life-size bronze figures of a male and a female police officer, was dedicated on Oct. 29, 1990, in memory of Illinois police officers killed in the line of duty. The 13-foot monument has a pedestal and base of red granite and was paid for with \$85,000 in public donations. Each May, a ceremony is held at the memorial on the southwest Capitol lawn to honor officers recently killed in the line of duty. Their names are added to the original 643 officers engraved on the surrounding polished black granite slates.

Sculptor: Keith Knoblock, 1990

## Illinois Firefighters Memorial

On May 13, 1999, a monument was erected in memory of “the firefighters of Illinois who have given their lives in the line of duty and to those who heroically serve with courage, pride and honor.” Four bronze firefighters and a rescued child on a 14-foot stone cairn are surrounded by red paver bricks and enclosed by a 2-foot wall. The monument was built through public contributions and the sale of Firefighters Memorial license plates. A ceremony is held at the memorial near the Stratton Building each May honoring Illinois’ fallen firefighters.

Sculptor: Neil Brodin, 1999



## 9/11 Memorial

Through fundraising efforts by the Blue Knights Law Enforcement Club of Illinois, a memorial to the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks was erected in 2005. The memorial, located along a walkway west of the Norton Building, depicts the three sites of the plane crashes, and the front features an etching of a New York firefighter raising the flag at Ground Zero. A memorial service takes place annually at the site of the memorial on the second Sunday in September.

Designer: DOH Services of Blue Island, 2005



For a brochure on the *Illinois State Capitol Sculptures: A Walking Tour*, including a map of the Capitol Complex, visit the Secretary of State’s Web Site at [www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com).