

To All Cohn High Alumni:



On Memorial Day, the U.S. flag flies at half-staff only for the first half of the day, and then is raised to full height from noon to sundown. This unique custom honors the war dead for the morning and living veterans for the rest of the day.

## Memorial Day 2024: When is it and what is it?

Memorial Day 2024 will take place on Monday 27 May, and many around the US will gather together to celebrate with the day off. As people gear up for a BBQ or pool party, many may actual be interested in learning more about the significance of the day, its origin and the somber nature of the commemoration.

Most historians believe that the celebration of Memorial Day began during or just after the Civil War. The first locality to begin celebrating is unknown but it is understood that the tradition began as a way to honor soldiers who had died in the war.

## Memorial Day and the American Civil

The Civil War in the US which lasted from 1861 through 1865, is the bloodiest in the nation's history. With all casualties belonging to the United States, estimates range from anywhere between over 600,000 to one million casualties, including 50,000 civilian deaths.

Some historians trace the origins of the holiday back to women who would decorate the graves of soldiers who died during the American Civil War. These efforts were described as somber and led women's organizations like the Ladies' Memorial Association to establish other holidays to commemorate the South's efforts and the Confederacy more broadly. Today three states, Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina celebrate Confederate Memorial Day as a public holiday. Other states including, Kentucky, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, and Tennessee also have a day to commemorate the Confederacy, but state offices remain open.

According to the Veterans Administration, in 1869, the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization made up of Union veterans, established "Decoration Day" as a day to decorate the graves of those who had died in the Civil War. The date of 30 May was chosen as it was believed that "flowers would be in bloom all over the country. Doylestown, Pennsylvania has the longest-running Memorial Day parade which has taken place since 1868.

## **Federal Holiday Status**

The expansion of Memorial Day to celebrate deaths from service members across all wars did not happen until after World War I. Until 1971, Memorial Day was celebrated on 30 May, however, it was one of four federal holidays included in the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. The four holidays included in this Act were moved to Mondays to create a three day weekend.

**Prayer for Veterans and Military Men and Women** Gracious God, we give thanks for military men and women, both from the past and present, and for their courageous service and sacrifice to our country and its people to secure the blessings of life, liberty, and justice for all. May our remembrance be a timely reminder that our freedom was purchased at high cost, and should not be taken for granted. Give us resolve to labor in faithful service to you until all share the benefits of freedom, justice, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen The Cohn High School Alumni Association honor all veterans for their sacrifice and service to our Great Country We wish all of our alumni and their families a warm, wonderful, 2024 Memorial Day God Bless America

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