



## The Arlington Story - How the Arlington Wreath Project was born

[Worcester Wreath](#) and its involvement with the Arlington project was inspired at the early age of 12 years old when, as a Bangor Daily News paper boy, Morrill Worcester won a trip to the Nation's Capital. It was a trip he would never forget, and [Arlington National Cemetery \(Official Site\)](#) made an indelible impression. In later life, he recognized that his success as a businessman was in large part, due to the values of this Nation and the Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.



In 1992, the Wreath Company found themselves with an excess of wreaths nearing the end of the holiday season. Seeing an opportunity to make a boyhood dream a reality, efforts to do something special with those wreaths began in earnest. With the help of Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, arrangements were made for the wreaths to be placed at Arlington in one of the older sections of the cemetery, a section which received fewer visitors with each passing year.

With plans underway, a number of other participants began their support for the project. James Prout, owner of Blue Bird Ranch, Inc generously provided and transportation all the way to Virginia. Volunteers from the local American Legion and VFW Posts gathered with members of the community to decorate each wreath with signature red, hand-tied bows. Member of the Maine State Society of Washington, DC and John Metzler, Jr, Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery worked to organize the wreath-laying, including the incorporation of a special ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

[Click for more info on groups, companies, and individuals who volunteer](#)

Now fifteen years and over 60,000 wreaths later, the original group has been joined by many others who participate in the project each year. After learning of the annual trek to Arlington to honor our fallen heroes, Larry Ross, an elementary school teacher from Canaan, Maine, has taken several groups of his students to help with the wreath-laying.

The Maine Wing of the Civil Air Patrol, under the guidance and leadership of Majors Wayne Merritt and Dennis Murray also participated and in the annual event over the last several years. Each student group conducts fundraising events throughout the year to make the trip.

*Please note:* many people have expressed a desire to donate to this cause. Worcester Wreath Company is committed to continue their Arlington Wreath Project, now expanded by the *Wreaths Across America* campaign.

Worcester Wreath cannot and will not accept any donations. Those who are interested however, may support either participating youth group by sending donations to:

Civil Air Patrol  
attn: Wreaths Across America  
PO Box 113  
Columbia Falls, ME 04623

\*Individuals interested in ordering balsam products for their own use are encouraged to place orders with [LL Bean](#) with whom Worcester Wreath has shared a business relationship for over 25 years. Your business is much appreciated.