

**KENOSHA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
HISTORICAL ARTIFACT DETERMINATION**

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>ARTIFACT NAME/DESCRIPTION</b>  | <i>KENOSHA COUNTY SOLDIERS MONUMENT</i>               |
| <b>ADDRESS</b>                    | <i>711 59TH PLACE - LIBRARY PARK</i>                  |
| <b>CONSTRUCTION DATE</b>          | <i>1900</i>   |
| <b>ARCHITECT/SCULPTOR/BUILDER</b> | <i>DANIEL BURNHAM (DESIGNER)<br/>DECCO (SCULPTOR)</i> |

**STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATION - MUST CHOOSE 1 OR MORE**

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| X | 1 | Item is a local historical artifact that is at least 50 years old.  |
| X | 2 | Item is associated with a property that meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. |

**STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATION - MUST CHOOSE 1 OR MORE**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| X | 3 | Item exemplifies or reflects the cultural, archaeological, political, economic, social, or religious history.                            |
| X | 4 | Item is identified with personages, events, or periods of history which personages, events, or periods are significant to the community. |
| X | 5 | Item embodies distinguishing characteristics of architecture, an architect, architectural materials, craftsmanship, or works of nature.  |
|   | 6 | Item is in its inherent historical nature provides the citizenry with educational or aesthetic enrichment.                               |
| X | 7 | Check here if the historical artifact is located in a designated local, State, or National Register property or district.                |

| <i>Level of Action</i>                         | <i>For Listing</i>                     | <i>No Listing</i> | <i>Removal from Listing</i> |
|--|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &amp; INSPECTIONS</i> | <b>X</b>                               |                   |                             |
| <i>PUBLIC HEARING DATE: 03/28/2013</i>         | <i>RECOMMENDATION DATE: 03/28/2013</i> |                   |                             |
| <i>HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION</i>        | <b>X</b>                               |                   |                             |
| <i>COMMON COUNCIL</i>                          | <b>X</b>                               |                   |                             |
| <i>DATE OF COUNCIL ACTION: 04/15/2013</i>      |  |                   |                             |

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Kenosha County Soldier's Monument is located at the north end of Library Park and is a contributing structure to the Library Park National Register District. The monument is sixty-one (61') feet high and built on a circular granite base which is four (4') feet above the park level. The granite base is ornamented with eight (8) buttresses, on which are placed granite cannon. The monument's shaft is fluted grey Vermont granite and is thirty-six (36') feet high, topped by a Corinthian capital, on which stands a ball crowned by the twelve (12') foot high bronze Civil War Nike figure "Winged Victory".

The Winged Victory holds an olive branch in her right hand ,to symbolize peace and a laurel wreath in her left hand, representing the heroism and sacrifice made in the war. The monument reads: "*In honor of the brave men of Kenosha County, who victoriously defended the Union on land on sea during the war of the great rebellion. 1861-1865*". The column was the largest single piece of granite ever brought into the state.



## **SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Kenosha County Soldiers' Monument was unveiled to commemorate the 1,367 Kenosha County men who fought and died (72 were casualties) in the American Civil War. By the end of the war it was estimated that almost each of the fourteen thousand county residents had a relative, friend or neighbor who died in the conflict.

The monument and statue of Winged Victory was a gift to the community from 71-year-old philanthropist Zalmon G. Simmons. The monument served to honor the past and also to symbolize the promise of a bright future. Simmons hired Daniel Burnham to design the monument. Burnham then hired an Italian sculptor, Decco, to execute the monument.

Seven months before the actual dedication of the Soldiers and Sailor's monument a significant tribute was delivered. The late Gilbert Simmons' (son of Zalmon Simmons) daughter, Elizabeth Simmons, deposited a box filled with rosters of Kenosha County members who served in nine (9) different companies, rosters of veterans in the GAR rolls, copies of bylaws, charters, and manuals of various veteran organizations, individual memorials to several Kenosha County residents killed in the war, copies of newspapers, buttons from the coats of confederate soldiers, an American flag, portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Simmons, and others including President McKinley, photos of Main Street and an 1899 penny. The monument was formally dedicated on May 30, 1900, a beautiful day.

During the "opening" of the memorial, they had wrapped a huge flag around the statue, and "unveiled" it. A huge crowd upward of thirty thousand people came to the Library Park to see the new monument. That was more than twice the population of the southeastern Wisconsin City at the time. Many visitors came by train from Chicago and Milwaukee for the event.

Daniel H. Burnham designed the old Kenosha County Courthouse and Jail (demolished) in 1885. Both the Gilbert M. Simmons Library and the monument were designed by the famous architect. He was the architect for many magnificent buildings at the 1893 Columbian Exposition held in Chicago and was considered one of the outstanding architects in American history.

A powerful composition was made "Winged Victory" (Beacons of Light) by Brian Balmages, which linked two historic landmarks in the City of Kenosha – a statue that commemorates those who fought in the name of freedom, and a lighthouse (Southport Lighthouse) that united an entire town. The "Winged Victory" was commissioned for the 50th annual Kenosha Unified School District (Band-O-Rama) by Dr. Timothy Yontz, coordinator of Fine Arts.