



Mosaic of the Month May 2024

'Mosaic of the Month' is **'Freedom is Not Free'**. This month's selection is dedicated to those who have paid the price for the freedoms we enjoy today. There are two ghost images in this mosaic. First, there is a soldier saluting among the stars. Second, there is an M16 in a pair of combat boots with dog tags hanging from the magazine and a helmet sitting on top the rifle butt. This image represents a life lost in combat fighting for freedom.

The first national observance of what was called **Decoration Day** was on May 30, 1868, to honor the Union soldiers who had died in the Civil War. Between the Union and Confederate soldiers, there were over 600,000 American lives lost from April 12, 1861 to May 9, 1865, during the Civil War. This represents more lives lost than the total number of Americans who were killed in **WWI**, **WWII**, the **Korean War** and the **Viet Nam War** combined. A horrific reminder that the many freedoms we enjoy each and every day are all a result of those who were willing to serve this Country and paid the ultimate price so that this great Nation of ours remains free today.

Memorial Day was always observed on May 30th, until in 1968 when Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which established **Memorial Day** as the last Monday in May in order to create a three-day weekend for federal employees. This change went into effect in 1971. There was a period of time following this change when Americans still referred to this holiday as **Decoration Day**, but that faded away and we now call it **Memorial Day**.

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