

## Rainbow Blvd & Rosedale Memorial Arch



Rainbow Boulevard was named and the Rosedale World War I Memorial Arch in Kansas City, Kansas was built to commemorate the service and sacrifice of the men of Rosedale and the Kansas City metropolitan area in the Great War.

### **Veterans Day - November 11th**

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” – officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

Veterans Day is an official United States federal holiday that is observed annually on November 11, honoring people who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces, also known as veterans. It coincides with other holidays including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which are celebrated in other parts of the world and also mark the anniversary of the end of World War I. The United States also originally observed Armistice Day; it then evolved into the current Veterans Day holiday in 1954

### **The 42nd United States Infantry Division**

The chain of events that lead to the naming of Rainbow Blvd and the construction of the arch began shortly after America entered the Great War. It was decided that, unlike the practice in previous wars, the first division of National Guard troops to be called up should be drawn from as many states as possible to demonstrate a sense of unity and common purpose. The new division was designated the 42nd United States Infantry Division and allotments for twenty-six states were drawn up, a mixture prompting Secretary of War Baker to informally christen the 42nd the “Rainbow Division.”



In the allotments for the Rainbow Division, the 117th Ammunition Train fell to Kansas. In June, 1917 Lieutenant Colonel Frank L. Travis assembled 375 men on top of Mount Marty in the city of Rosedale and had them sworn in. Contrary to popular belief, the men came from throughout the

metropolitan area and not just from Rosedale.

## **Rainbow Blvd: KC's Honor of Those Who Served**

On May 12, 1919 the City of Rosedale held a “Welcome Home” celebration for the returning veterans. The local veterans were part of the 42nd United States Infantry Division, also known as the “Rainbow Division.” The 42nd was known as the Rainbow Division because soldiers from 26 states made up the division. The streets were decorated with rainbow colored bunting, and Hudson Road was officially renamed Rainbow Boulevard in honor of those who had served in the 42nd. The celebration was shared with communities from Johnson and Miami Counties in an outburst of patriotic feelings.

The Rainbow Division was the fourth American combat unit to arrive in France and was the first National Guard troop called up. On the front lines, the Rainbow Division sustained 16,242 casualties. This was almost 60% of the entire division. Because of Rainbow Division’s distinction and bravery, Rosedale renamed Hudson Road to Rainbow Boulevard in time for the Welcome Home celebration.

## **The Rosedale Memorial Arch**

The Rosedale Memorial Arch in Kansas City, Kansas was dedicated on September 7, 1924, two years after the groundbreaking. The monument was built to commemorate the service and sacrifice of the men of Rosedale who fought in World War I. The total cost of the arch was \$12,179.[Learn more about the Rosedale Memorial Arch and its historical designation.](#)

More information about [The Rainbow Division Veterans Foundation](#)