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FACT SHEET: NATIONAL WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION ACTIVITIES

May 2004

Washington, D.C. Events

[All time listings in this section are Local Washington time]

Smithsonian Institution, Washington National Cathedral, Military Performing Units Join With ABMC to Produce a Four-Day “Tribute to a Generation” Celebration

The four-day *Tribute to a Generation* dedication celebration planned by the American Battle Monuments Commission continues to take shape. The calendar of events, highlighted by the memorial’s formal dedication ceremony on Saturday, May 29, will run over Memorial Day weekend 2004 from May 27 through May 30.

Events will celebrate the memorial and its placement on the National Mall. They will also pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of America’s World War II generation, many of whom are making plans to be in Washington to see their memorial dedicated. The Tribute to a Generation will appeal to a wide variety of interests, with the WWII generation being the central focus for each. Activities include wartime reminiscences, reunions, big band and swing music, WWII memorabilia and equipment displays, a religious service, military ceremonial units, and educational opportunities for all ages.

Dedication Ceremony

The memorial will be dedicated on Saturday afternoon, May 29, at 2 p.m. Gates will open in the morning sometime between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. (the exact time will be announced at a later date). Tickets are required for seating at the dedication ceremony. ABMC has identified alternate non-ticketed viewing areas.

Beginning at noon, two hours of lively pre-ceremony entertainment will take attendees back to the wartime era through music, video images, newsreel clips, and reminiscences of the time. Big band and swing music will be highlighted along with a patriotic finale. Musical groups from the armed forces will entertain.

The U.S. Postal Service will introduce a stamp depicting the National World War II Memorial at the memorial site just prior to the official dedication ceremony, sponsored by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). More than 96 million stamps will be available among the nation’s 38,000 Post Offices the same day. Many of these Post Offices will conduct similar ceremonies. More information is available at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps.

The dignified dedication that follows will recognize the important addition of the memorial to the National Mall and pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the WWII generation. President Bush has been invited to receive the memorial on behalf of the nation. Other dignitaries will participate in the ceremony, including former Senator Bob Dole, who served as the voluntary national chairman of the fund-raising campaign.

There has been strong, nationwide interest in attending the dedication ceremony, particularly by members of the WWII generation and due to overwhelming demand, ticket requests are no longer being accepted as of 6:00 P.M. on May 12. If any tickets are returned by current ticketholders unable to attend the dedication events, ABMC will offer those tickets on a first-come, first-served basis beginning Thursday, May 27, at 11:00 a.m. at the Dedication Information Tent located at the National World War II Reunion site next to the "Building the Memorial" Pavilion on the National Mall between 4th and 7th Streets.

National World War II Reunion

The Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in partnership with ABMC will produce a National World War II Reunion. This open-air, tented activity will be open daily, Thursday through Sunday, May 27-30, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Reunion will be staged on the National Mall from 3rd to 7th Street, NW, between the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum and the National Gallery of Art. The event is free and open to the public. Tickets are not required.

Activities of the Reunion will include:

- Reunion Hall – A central gathering place for all World War II generation members attending the dedication celebration.
- Two large performance pavilions where guests will once again hear the live sounds of big band, swing and other music from the WWII era.
- Wartime Stories Tent - Narrative sessions, interviews and workshops on a variety of topics, and chats with prominent WWII veterans will take place in this tent.
- Veterans History Project Tent - The Veterans History Project at the American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress will present interviews, speakers and exhibits that showcase first-hand accounts of those who served in uniform and on the home front. Library of Congress representatives will also provide information and workshops on how to write, record, audio/videotape and preserve personal histories.
- Preserving Memories – Experts from the National Archives, the Smithsonian Institution and the Library of Congress will counsel veterans and their families on how best to preserve the documents, scrapbooks, photos, medals and memorabilia from WWII.
- Building the Memorial – This pavilion will feature an exhibition on the planning and building of the memorial.
- Veterans Services – Representatives from Veterans Affairs, other federal agencies and other veterans service organizations will be on hand to provide information on veterans' resources and benefits that are available.
- Family Activities – Children of all ages can engage in hands-on activities relating to the WWII period.
- Military Equipment Display – Throughout the Reunion site there will be displays of military artifacts and equipment.

Updated information on the Reunion will be available through the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage web site at www.folklife.si.edu/CFCH/WWII/WorldWarII.htm.

Salute to World War II Veterans

The armed forces ceremonial and musical units stationed in Washington, D.C. will stage an entertainment salute to all WWII veterans. Talented members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast

Guard will perform this narrative and musical tribute. Be prepared to experience again scenes of service and sacrifice of the men and women who preserved freedom during the war, along with stirring music and military precision.

The two-hour performances will be held at the MCI Center, a large indoor arena in downtown Washington, D.C. The MCI Center is accessible via Metro and is surrounded by a variety of dining establishments. There will be three shows: Friday, May 28, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Saturday, May 29, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, May 29 from 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.* Tickets are required for this event, however, due to overwhelming public demand, ABMC is no longer accepting ticket requests.

*This show includes a simulcast viewing of the pre-dedication ceremony at 12:00 noon and the Dedication Ceremony at 2:00 p.m. Eastern.

A Service of Celebration

An interfaith service is scheduled for Saturday, May 29, at 10 a.m. at the Washington National Cathedral. This service will celebrate the dedication of the memorial and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II. Military and civilian clergy, as well as WWII dignitaries, are expected to participate in the service at the cathedral known as *A National House of Prayer for all People*.

Seating space in the cathedral is extremely limited, so attendance will be controlled. ABMC is working to establish alternate sites in the Washington area at which the many who want to experience the memorial service can view a simulcast of the program. Potential viewing sites include the area of the National WWII Reunion on the Mall and the MCI Center.

All attending should be ready for long lines, unpredictable weather, and inconveniences that could arise. ABMC is committed to meeting the special needs of our WWII generation guests.

Local Events

Many members of the WWII generation will not be able to make the trip to Washington for the dedication. Organizations and communities are encouraged to schedule local events and activities that pay tribute to the generation in conjunction with the dedication ceremony on the Mall. Live broadcasts of the National World War II Memorial dedication ceremony are as follows:

- **The History Channel.** Live broadcast will begin at 1:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Sat., May 29. For more information, visit www.historychannel.com/dday. Note that additional D-Day 60th anniversary programming will take place from May 29 through June 6.
 - **C-SPAN.** Live broadcast will begin at 1:00 p.m. (Central Time) on Sat., May 29. For more information, visit www.c-span.org, click on “Calendar”.
 - **WDVA’s Wisconsin Veterans Museum.** The broadcast will be shown live at WDVA’s Wisconsin Veterans Museum in the 2nd Floor Education Center. Seating is limited to 175, and is on a first-come, first served basis. A pre-broadcast introduction will be given by Dr. Richard Zeitlin, Museum Director, at 12:30 p.m. on Sat., May 29, with the live viewing immediately following.
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