

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
January 16, 2019

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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF MONTE CASSINO TO BE COMMEMORATED AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

Ceremony to mark one of the longest and bloodiest engagements of the Italian campaign during World War II.

Washington, D.C. – On Thursday, January 17th at 11:30 a.m., the Friends of the National World War II Memorial will hold a brief ceremony and wreath presentation to mark the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino, a costly series of four assaults by the Allies against the “Winter Line” in Italy held by Axis forces during the Italian Campaign of World War II.

The 123-day Battle of Monte Cassino, from January 17 – May 18, 1944, was one of the longest and bloodiest engagements of the Italian campaign as the Allies aimed to breakthrough to Rome. Over the course of the battle, Allied troops assaulted the Axis line four times, the last involving twenty divisions attacking along a twenty-mile front. The German defenders were finally driven from their positions and the Axis line finally collapsed when the Second Polish Corps succeeded in capturing the abbey. The capture of Monte Cassino resulted in 55,000 Allied casualties.

During the January 17th ceremony at the World War II Memorial, WWII veterans and representatives of our Allied Nations will present wreaths at the Atlantic Arch of the Memorial in honor of the 240,000 Allies who served and in remembrance of the 55,000 Allies killed or wounded during the Battle of Monte Cassino.

The Friends of the National World War II Memorial's WWII 75th Anniversary Commemoration is generously sponsored by AT&T. Generous support has also been provided by the Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation and Worthington Industries.

Who: World War II Veterans
Commander Richard McHugh of the Royal Navy and Assistant Naval Attaché, British Embassy
Colonel Patrick Robichaud, Canadian Army Forces, Embassy of Canada
Captain Jean-Emmanuel Roux de Luze, Navy Attaché, Embassy of France
Representative from the Embassy of Italy
Lieutenant Colonel Aidan Shattock, New Zealand Defense Force, Embassy of New Zealand
Colonel Paweł Marzęda, Deputy Defense and Air Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Poland
Barbara Weidl, daughter of the late Ernest Weidl, a veteran of the Battle of Monte Cassino
Gunnery Sergeant Michael Warnick, United States Marine Band
Military District of Washington Army Color Guard

Where: National World War II Memorial
17th Street between Constitution and Independence Avenues
Washington, DC

When: Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 11:30 AM

About Friends of the National World War II Memorial (www.wwiimemorialfriends.org):

Founded in 2007, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to honoring and preserving the national memory of World War II and to creating the next “Greatest Generation” of tomorrow. To meet this mission, Friends sponsors an annual public lecture series featuring prominent historians; hosts an annual teachers conference in Washington, DC; and collects and archives video interviews of World War II veterans and other members of the Greatest Generation. Additionally, Friends has the lead responsibility in planning, staging, and funding five or more major national commemorative events annually and is currently sponsoring a national four-year World War II 75th anniversary commemoration. Friends relies on private support to breathe new life into the Memorial and to ensure that it continues to serve as a living lesson for all Americans.

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