

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 19, 2015

**WWII VETERANS TO GATHER AT WWII MEMORIAL ON MEMORIAL DAY  
TO REMEMBER 400,000 AMERICANS LOST DURING WWII**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) and the National Park Service (NPS) will remember and honor the more than 400,000 Americans who lost their lives during WWII, and pay tribute to the 16 million who served, during a special Memorial Day Observance at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Monday, May 25, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

As part of the commemoration, a dozen World War II veterans will lay wreaths at the Freedom Wall in remembrance of their fallen brothers and sisters. This will include World War II veterans from Norway who are part of a delegation hosted by the Royal Norwegian Embassy.

The ceremony will feature musical performances by Grammy Award-nominated songwriter Bob Regan and 16 students visiting from Collège Elie Faure in Ste Foy la Grande, Southwestern France. Mr. Regan will be performing his song "The Last Monday in May," a song about Memorial Day written in collaboration with veterans. The 16 French students, who are part of a remembrance school program meant to honor the American veterans who fought in France during WWII, will sing "O'America" for our veterans and other special guests.

Friends chairman Josiah Bunting III will speak on behalf of Friends. Sean Kennealy, acting deputy superintendent of the National Mall and Memorial Parks, will speak on behalf of NPS. Chaplain (Captain) Joe Brankatelli will provide the invocation.

The United States Army Band will play throughout the ceremony. The ceremony will begin with the posting of colors by the Military District of Washington's Armed Forces Color Guard and, following remarks and wreath layings, will conclude with the playing of Taps.

Additionally, "America's Freedom Bell" will be on display at the World War II Memorial throughout the Memorial Day weekend. America's Freedom Bell, sponsored by the Spirit of Liberty Foundation, is a symbol of patriotism and pride for our nation's armed forces. The bell has the five official seals from each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces in the order in which they were founded circling the bell. The bell also contains metal from the World Trade Center. Everyone who visits the World War II Memorial over the Memorial Day weekend will be invited to ring the bell in honor of a family member or friend who has or is serving or just to say thank you to our armed forces.

**About Friends of the National World War II Memorial ([www.wwiimemorialfriends.org](http://www.wwiimemorialfriends.org)):**

Founded in 2007, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to ensuring that the legacy, lessons, and sacrifices of World War II are not forgotten. To meet this mission, Friends sponsors an annual public lecture series featuring prominent historians; provides teachers with curriculum materials; 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 and staging five or more major national commemorative events annually and each summer sponsors a dozen free public performances of military bands at the Memorial. 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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For media inquiries:

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