

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
October 11, 2017

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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS TO BE COMMEMORATED AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

*A wreath will be laid at the Pacific Arch of the Memorial in honor of
all those who took part in this significant naval battle of World War II.*

Washington, D.C. – On Wednesday, October 25th at 11:30 a.m., the Friends of the National World War II Memorial will host a brief ceremony and wreath presentation at the World War II Memorial’s Pacific Arch to mark the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands, a major naval engagement fought between the United States Navy and the Imperial Japanese Navy during the lengthy and strategically important Guadalcanal campaign in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

Japanese carriers and other large warships moved into position near the southern Solomon Islands on October 25, 1942 to support their ground offensive on Guadalcanal and to engage the U.S. naval forces that responded to the ground offensive.

The U.S. and Japanese naval warships and aircraft confronted each other on the morning of October 26, 1942, just north of the Santa Cruz Islands. After an exchange of carrier air attacks, U.S. surface ships were forced to retreat from the battle area with one carrier sunk and another heavily damaged. The participating Japanese carrier forces also retired because of high aircraft and aircrew losses plus significant damage to two carriers. Although a tactical victory for the Japanese in terms of ships sunk and damaged, the loss of many irreplaceable, veteran aircrews would prove to be a long term strategic advantage for the Allies.

Military historian Eric Hammel summed up the significance of the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands as, “Santa Cruz was a Japanese victory. That victory cost Japan her last best hope to win the war.”

To mark this significant battle in U.S. history, Friends will host a brief ceremony and wreath presentation at the World War II Memorial’s Pacific Arch in which WWII veterans will present wreaths in honor of the U.S. Navy service members who served and in remembrance of the nearly 300 killed during the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands.

Who: Josiah Bunting III, Chairman, Friends of the National World War II Memorial
World War II Veterans

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

When: Wednesday, October 25, 2017 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. 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 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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