Rededication Ceremonies Planned for the Japanese Garden of Peace

Special events are being planned for the Rededication of the Japanese Peace Garden in the Nimitz Memorial Courtyard and the Garden, itself. The Garden has been fully restored as completely as possible to the original intent of the Garden designer, Taketora Saito. Guests of honor will include Mrs. Muneko Hosaka, the great granddaughter of naval hero Admiral Togo Heihachiro, and her husband, Dr. Yoshio Hosaka, traveling from Japan. Diplomatic officers from the Japanese Consulate in Houston, as well as Japanese Legislators, are also expected to attend.

The Kaminari Taiko Drummers, an ensemble based in Houston, TX, will perform. Taiko is the Japanese word for drum, and the art of Taiko carries deep significance in Japanese culture. The group gives a high energy performance that fuses traditional instruments with modern rhythms. They will perform at 9:30am on the patio of the former Nimitz Hotel and again at the end of the ceremonies.

Another highlight will be an opportunity to observe a portion of a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Members of the Japanese Tea Ceremony group in Houston will participate. There also will be a tree planting and plaque unveiling.

The Rededication is open to the public and will begin at 10am on 30 April in the Japanese Peace Garden. Plans for this important day are progressing rapidly. Please check our website for new details. This will be a fascinating experience for everyone, and we hope you can attend.
Volunteers: The Life Blood of Our Museum

Meet Our Volunteer Coordinator
Connie Eckhardt

Connie Eckhardt, (right) who has lived in Fredericksburg for 32 years, started as our part-time Coordinator of Volunteers in January 2017. In her short time here, she was able to heighten the volunteers experience within the Museum and enhance the “whole team” atmosphere. Last May, she was asked to join the Nimitz team in a full time capacity, taking on additional responsibilities. Connie always brings her fun personality and energy to everything she does. She previously worked as an Executive Director at Heritage Place Assisted Living for ten years. She loved providing a warm home atmosphere for the residents; to her they were her second family. Her vast work experience also includes Andreucci Wines, Law Office of J.R. McCracken, Hill Country Titles and James P. Riggs Oil & Gas.

Besides her work at the Museum, Connie is currently involved in the Fredericksburg Community Chorus and serves on the Board of the Boys & Girls Club, Texas Heritage Music Foundation and Living Well College. She also enjoys photography, cooking and gardening.

We Need You!

Last year, the Museum was extremely busy with the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the National Museum of the Pacific War and the reopening of the Living History Programs after the completion of the Pacific Combat Zone. By year’s end, 273 volunteers were on the Foundation’s rolls, and they had contributed 16,614 hours of assistance. The value of their contributions cannot be overestimated.

We have a variety of needs at the National Museum of the Pacific War, and most can be done any day of the week! Here is a list:

• Gallery Attendants
• Oral History Transcribers
• Plaque Installation
• Living History Re-enactor
• Living History Support Staff
• Assist Education Department
• Special Events (such as the Nimitz Dinner, Golf Tournament, and Symposium)

To apply for any of these volunteer jobs or to ask for further information, pls contact Connie Eckhardt at 830-997-8600, x223 or at ceckhardt@nimitzfoundation.org.

Oral Historian Reaches 1,000th Interview

We would like to honor Richard Misenheimer, one of the Oral History volunteers. In late November 2017, he completed his 1000th Oral History interview for the Museum’s Oral History project. He has been interviewing veterans and people who worked on the home front for over a decade and is responsible for approximately 20 percent of the Oral History collection since as of late 2017, there were just under 5,000 total interviews in it.

To collect an oral history can take several hours so Misenheimer’s accomplishment is huge. Veterans interviewed by him often comment on both his professionalism and patience.

The Museum is very appreciative of his dedication, and Pacific War scholars will always be indebted to him. His efforts can be summed up as a “job well done.” Thank you, Richard.
We would like to introduce you to Legacy Society members Bob and Janice Phelps. In the following, they present, in their own words, why they feel it is important for them and their family members to support the Admiral Nimitz Foundation through the Legacy Society.

Why we support the Admiral Nimitz Foundation:
Our parents served in uniform in World War II. Janice’s father served in the US Navy in the Pacific theater. Both my parents were officers in the US Navy — my mother stateside and my father as a carrier-based naval aviator in the Atlantic and Pacific. The National Museum of the Pacific War (Museum) in Fredericksburg, TX, powerfully tells the stories of the men and women who served with our parents in a complicated, brutal world-wide struggle against tyranny. The Admiral Nimitz Foundation (Foundation) provides financial support to the Museum, helping insure that future generations understand and value that generation’s defense of our country and our democratic way of life.

Why it is important for our family to support the Foundation: Our families over the generations have strongly supported the civic life of their communities, including military and public service, and in hands-on and financial support of educational institutions and programs: schools, museums, and Boy and Girl Scouting, for example. Our children continue that practice. Supporting the Foundation fits the philanthropic history of our families. We support the Foundation and consider our legacy through the Fleet Admiral Nimitz Legacy Society an especially effective way to extend our support of the Foundation and Museum beyond our deaths.

How a legacy to the Foundation can work: Estate executors follow written instructions. A legacy to the Foundation can be included in a complete will or be prepared independently in proper form and maintained accessible to a proposed executor by reference to the current will. The Foundation development staff can be helpful providing form and substance. Please contact Development Director Marty Kaderli at 830-997-8600, ext. 204 or email Kaderli@nimitzfoundation.org.

Avoid estate planning procrastination: Estate planning routinely suffers from procrastination. Avoid the normal inertia and help the Museum continue telling the stories of the men and women who served our country in that time and place. Please join Janice and me with a legacy to the Foundation and membership in the Fleet Admiral Nimitz Legacy Society. Please feel free to contact us through Development Director Marty Kaderli on the contact points above to discuss our commitment.

To Join the Legacy Society
Members of the Fleet Admiral Nimitz Legacy Society are individuals, like you, who are passionate about commemorating the service and sacrifices of veterans. Become a member by making a provision in your estate for the Admiral Nimitz Foundation and National Museum of the Pacific War and notifying the Foundation of your intent. Your gift will ensure the story of sacrifices and victories in the Pacific will always be remembered, honored and studied, and it will allow the Foundation to thank you during your lifetime.

To answer any questions or receive a Letter of Intent for Estate Gift, please contact Marty Kaderli at 830-997-8600, x204 or kaderli@NimitzFoundation.org or visit our website, PacificWarMuseum.org, under “Get Involved.”
In January, a new building was dedicated which will house the Museum’s Education Department. It has been named the Oveta Culp Hobby Education Center in honor of the woman who was the first director of the Women’s Army Corps during World War II. The new center is located on the grounds of the historic Ruff Haus property, which is owned by the Admiral Nimitz Foundation, and is next to the Pacific Combat Zone. Besides serving as the headquarters of the Education Department, many of its educational programs will take place there.

The interest of the Hobby family in having the building dedicated to Oveta Culp Hobby was exemplified by the attendance of Paul and Walker Hobby (grandson and great grandson), who unveiled the plaque dedicated to their grandmother. Rae Weisbruch, a WWII veteran who worked closely with Hobby, was also present.

Bryan Degner, Director of Education, commented “It was an honor for the Museum to have been given the approval by the family to name the Museum’s Educational Center in honor of Oveta Culp Hobby, the first director of the Women’s Army Corps during WWII. Paying tribute to such a great individual whose leadership and vision helped women to be accepted into the military and blazed a trail for others to follow is an important part of WWII that needs to be remembered.”

Born in Killeen, TX in 1905, Oveta Culp Hobby’s roles included being the first commanding officer of the Women’s Army, joint owner and executive in a Houston newspaper and radio station, the first Secretary of the Department of Housing, Education, and Welfare, wife of the former Governor of Texas, and the mother of two children.

When Hobby was first approached by the War Department to organize a section on women’s activities for the army, she refused citing her other responsibilities. However, after her husband encouraged her to join the war effort, she agreed to take the job as the head of the Women’s Interest Section. After Pearl Harbor was attacked, she became the head of the fledgling Women’s Army. She did so rather reluctantly and later stated “It never would have crossed my mind to command an army of women. I never did learn to salute properly or master the 30” stride.”

The job was tough and involved constant travel, frequent 24 hour days, and becoming adept at handling other commanding officers who were horrified at the idea of women soldiers. However, the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC —later the WACs) proved their worth quickly. Congress had originally agreed that perhaps women could do 54 kinds of jobs. By the time Hobby was finished, they were doing 239.

Hobby achieved the rank of Colonel and received the Distinguished Service Medal for efforts during the war. She was the first woman to receive it.
When former Army nurse Kathleen Cormack talks about “her girls,” her eyes gleam with passion. While readers may assume she is talking about friends or family, the term actually refers to nine mannequins dressed in authentic WWII women’s uniforms which she recently donated to the Museum’s Education Department.

The mannequins represent women who served in the WACS, SPARS, Marines, WAVES, and the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. Kathleen has been collecting men’s and women’s uniforms for about 25 years and has pieces which go back to the Revolutionary War. However, it is clear her love is focused on the women who served in WWII. She wants to honor them because they went against the perceived norm and joined the work force, thus making valuable contributions and opening up many opportunities for women.

Finding women’s uniforms from the WWII period is challenging, especially uniforms which are complete from head to toe. This is partially because the women who served in the war grew up during the Great Depression and were very frugal. Thus, when they returned, they did not save their uniforms, instead recycling them into jackets and other clothing more suitable for their peacetime lives.

To acquire her massive collection (which numbers in the hundreds of pieces), Kathleen has found eBay to be her major source. Thrift and surplus stores yield little in the way of women’s uniforms. Unfortunately, with the passing of the WWII generation, heirs often discard the uniforms (either out of ignorance or lack of interest), with valuable pieces ending up in the dump.

Cormack also donated a collection of original WWII posters pertaining to recruitment, the Homefront and women’s wartime roles. In just a few months, the posters donated by Kathleen have already been used in both on and off-site education programs, and over a thousand students have seen these historical examples of women in the military and efforts on the home front. The Education Department will incorporate the mannequins into a lesson on women in the military during WWII that will be used in its future distance center which allows the Museum to reach students who might never get to visit.
Dear Members,

With a successful 2017 in our rearview mirror, we are looking forward to a busy and productive 2018. Thanks to your support, we are off to a good start! This newsletter covers a few of the events that we have going on this year. You will see that there is a wide variety. Hopefully, you will be able to participate in one or more to experience them first hand. You can always find more information on the what, where and when of the events by visiting our website.

Besides the normal events, which include our Distinguished Speaker Series and the plaque commemorations, we plan to start the renovation of the Nimitz Museum in the old Nimitz Hotel. We are projecting an August 2018 start and anticipate the Nimitz Museum will be closed for about eight to nine months during the renovation. All other facilities, including the George H. W. Bush Gallery and Pacific Combat Zone, will remain open during this period.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in our 50th Anniversary 2017 Annual Fund Drive. It was one of our best drives ever raising nearly $173,000. Ten percent of that amount will be added to the Museum and Foundation’s Endowment Fund to help perpetuate the next 50 years of our mission. Your generous contributions help ensure we can continue to expand our educational offerings and serve our visitors. Thank you!!

You remain a critical part of our success. With your continued help and dedicated support, we will continue to educate, excite our visitors, and honor those who have served our country by telling their stories.

Thank you, and I hope to see you at the Museum during 2018.

Best Wishes
Mike Hagee

Scale Model of Pearl Harbor on the Eve of the Japanese Invasion

About 25 years ago, Naval historian Reverend Todd Hammond, who is from Fort Wayne, IN, decided to build a model display of Pearl Harbor on the eve of the Japanese air attack to pay tribute to the men who lost their lives or had their lives forever changed on that fateful day.

Few people were invited to view the almost 8’x12’ model. However, many encouraged Hammond to make the diorama visible to the public, and in 2017, it was put on display at the National Museum of the U.S. Navy. Now our Museum is privileged to have it on display in the George H. W. Bush Gallery near its East entrance.
Over 100 people braved inclement weather to honor Pearl Harbor veterans in the historic Nimitz Ballroom on 7 December 2017. Capt. Clarence Franklin, Jr., Commanding Officer, Navy Information Operations Command, Texas, was the keynote speaker. He spoke of the heroism of the men caught in the surprise attack on that December morning and thanked the veterans who were present at the ceremony for their service and bravery.

Bryan Degner, Museum Education Director, welcomed the audience and recognized the veterans. One was J.C. Alston, who was aboard the USS California when the Japanese attacked. His story has been part of History Channel documentaries depicting that fateful day. His Oral History interview has been digitized by the Museum and is available on line.

Another veteran present, James Leavelle, was on the USS Whitney, a destroyer tender, during the attack. Fortunately, the Whitney was not hit, but Leavelle was a witness to the carnage all around him, which has been difficult to forget. Later in life, Leavelle was also involved in the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination. In fact, there is an iconic photo of Leavelle, in a tan suit, escorting a handcuffed Lee Harvey Oswald as Jack Ruby fired a gun, killing him.

Thus, it was appropriate that Alston and Leavelle presented the wreath honoring Pearl Harbor veterans. They were both true witnesses to history.

Pearl Harbor Commemoration - 2017

East Meets West: Japanese Students Visit

Recently, while on a ten day cultural trip to San Antonio, 20 students from Takayama Nishi High School in Japan visited the Museum. Their school had established a relationship with the International School of the Americas which is a magnet school in the Northeast ISD. This is the 17th year of the exchange program, but this was the first group to visit Fredericksburg and the Museum.

The students toured the George H.W. Bush Gallery and the Pacific Combat Zone before heading out to explore Main Street. Director of Education Bryan Degner asked several students their impression of the Museum, and their responses were all positive. A number of the students commented on how much they enjoyed the exhibits and that they had learned new things about the Pacific War. One student said that he was a little apprehensive about visiting the Museum because he was not sure how he would be received. However, he said he was very impressed with the history presented in the exhibits and said it was done in a way that did not demonize the Japanese.

Battle Buddies Coming this Summer!

Be Sure To Sign Up for the 4th Annual Battle Buddies Classic Clay Shoot
25 August 2018

Benefits Admiral Nimitz Foundation & Veterans Assistance Dogs of Texas Teams or Individuals Welcome

Sponsorships Also Available Contact Savannah Richter on 830 997-8600, ext. 211 or SRichter@nimitzfoundation.org
Seventy-five years ago, Japanese forces continued to assert their strategic initiatives in General Douglas MacArthur’s Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) of operations. MacArthur sent American and Australian land forces into battle in and around the Australian territory of New Guinea against a determined and resolute foe. They fought in terrain and climate which would exact a maximum price for their efforts. SWPA Force denial operations, such as the air campaign that would further defeat Japanese logistical goals in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea (2-4 March 1943) along with successful maritime operations, helped the Allies eventually achieve their goals. These included setting the stage for the liberation of the Philippines from Japanese occupation and denying manpower reinforcements to Japanese units fighting against Admiral Chester Nimitz’ Central Pacific campaign.

Operation LILIPUT had been initiated in December 1942. Its mission was to provide for the regular transport of supplies, troops, and weapons along the New Guinea coast between Milne and Oro Bays to sustain the New Guinea campaign. This was primarily carried out by convoys of one or two Dutch cargo vessels and an escort of the Royal Australian Navy. During the six months of the operation, they delivered 3,802 troops and over 60,000 tons of supplies to Oro Bay.

Thirty-six years after its launch in Rotterdam, the Dutch cargo ship, s’Jacob, was traveling on a course taking it west from Milne Bay to Oro Bay along the northeast coast of New Guinea. It was 8 March 1943. Her Dutch captain, Javanese crew, and the vessel itself—owned by Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij (KPM)--had been active since the war’s onset. Originally part of the Dutch East Indies trade, she had soon provided logistical support to the American-British-Dutch-Australia (ABDA) Command. The ship was one of 21 KPM ships ordered to Fremantle, Australia, after the fall of Java and the surrender of Singapore. She was chartered by the United States Army Forces in Australia (USAFIA) and was soon assigned to the fleet under the command of General MacArthur. The ‘s Jacob, armed with a 4-in naval gun, was being escorted by the corvette (minesweeper) HMAS Bendigo (J-187) to Oro Bay as part of the LILIPUT logistical effort.

Private George Watson, U.S. Army, sat with his friend, Sgt. James E. Guilford, Jr. on the topside of the ‘s Jacob, catching some sunshine after lunchtime on that 8 March afternoon. Watson was attached to the 2nd Battalion, 29th Quartermaster Regiment as a laundry and bath specialist. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1915 and later attended Colorado A&M (now Colorado State University). Graduating in 1942, he entered the army that September, attending basic training at Fort Lee, VA. He was sent to Charleston, SC, and afterward to Newport News, VA, where he embarked in December on the USS Hermitage (AP-54). After a Panama Canal transit, the ship sailed across the Pacific and arrived a month later in Brisbane, Australia.

The ‘s Jacob left Sydney in February, sailed on to Port Moresby and then on to Milne Bay with Watson aboard. The cargo steamer had navigated the difficult passage around Cape Nelson and was heading for Oro Bay. It had just passed KPM’s SS Karsik and HMAS Kapunda (J-218) sailing back to Milne Bay when nine high-altitude Japanese bombers escorted by 12 fighters attacked her at about 1p.m. The aircraft scored three direct hits on the vessel and had at least 15 near misses that further damaged the ship.

As the attack progressed, the crew and troops were soon ordered to abandon ship and began throwing items overboard for flotation use. Private Watson considered himself a strong swimmer. Unconcerned for his own safety, he jumped into the sea and repeatedly went after survivors who could not swim or who were in distress and assisted them to the safety of the rafts available. His efforts saved several of his comrades. Ablaze, ‘s Jacob began listing to starboard. It took only 18 minutes for the ship to sink bow-first off Portlock Harbor, eventually leaving behind a tranquil sea.

The turbulence caused by the sinking ship took advantage of Watson’s fatigue brought on by his lifesaving efforts. As the ship slipped under the surface of the bay, the soldier -- weakened in his efforts to save others -- was unable to fight the suction pulling him deeper into the ocean depths. Bendigo picked up 153 survivors. George Watson was not one of them.

Private George Watson was the first African-American soldier in World War II to receive the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for his extraordinary courage. Over 1.2 million African-Americans served during World War II; however, no Medal of Honor recipients were noted in their ranks. A 1993 Army review of the wartime award process recommended an upgrade of seven DSCs to the Medal of Honor. George Watson would become the only African-American recipient of the Medal of Honor for the Pacific War on 13 January 1997. His medal is displayed in the U.S. Army Quartermaster Museum at Fort Lee, VA. The Military Sealift Command’s USNS Watson (T-AKR-310) is named in his honor.
Museum to Host Robotics Contest

With a growing emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), our Museum and the Gillespie County 4-H Robotic Club are partnering to host the first annual robotic competition on Saturday, 12 May, from 9:00am - 12:00pm at the Museum. The students will be using Lego Mindstorm EV3 robotic kits and will program them to carry out certain missions as they “Island Hop” across the Pacific.

The competition mat is designed to look like a number of islands where key battles took place during WWII in the Pacific. Before the contest, the students will research these battles, talk with veterans and visit with the Museum’s Education Department. This will allow them to learn about WWII history and the resources the Museum offers.

During the competition, teams will attempt a number of tasks using their robots. Some of the tasks include clearing the jungle to build an air strip, breaking through the sea wall to bring men and equipment ashore and knocking out enemy bunkers. The “islands” the landings will take place on are Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and Tinian.

This contest is designed to encourage students to look into the advances of technology that took place during WWII and the advances of today.

Museum Stores:

Admiral Nimitz Statuette Gift With Purchase
Receive “Creation of a Leader” FREE ($20.00 value) with your purchase of each 12” Admiral Nimitz Statuette! Supplies limited! $49.95

NEW! Patriotic Museum T-Shirt
Adult, Ladies and Youth Sizes. $14.95 - $22.00

Foundation Members Receive a 15% Discount

TO ORDER: Call 830-997-8600, x252
ON-LINE: https://store.pacificwarmuseum.org
Shipping and TX Taxes Extra
**TEMPORARY EXHIBITS:**

**USS Texas, the Last Dreadnought**

Be sure to drop by and see the special exhibit honoring the USS Texas, which is currently on display in the temporary gallery in the George H.W. Bush Gallery. This battleship, commissioned over 100 years ago, is the last dreadnought in existence. It served in Veracruz in 1914 and is the only surviving battleship to have seen action in both World Wars. During the war in the Pacific, it provided naval gunfire support at the key battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The vessel was decommissioned in 1948 after having earned five battle stars for its courageous service in the Second World War.

On display, you will find circa 60 artifacts, including a silver service (pictured) presented to the ship by the people of Texas. Other objects include photographs and personal things which belonged to the crew. A special listening station shares the memories of certain crew members who served during WWII.

This exhibit is on display until 3 June 2018 and is free to the public.

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**Prisoners of War Under the Rising Sun**

This special exhibit features a look at the life of a POW through the material in the museum’s collection and several pieces of artwork by former POW Ben Steele (above) which were borrowed from the Montana Museum of Art and Culture at the University of Montana. Stationed in the Philippines at the onset of WWII, Steele participated in the first major land battle on the Bataan Peninsula, which ended with the surrender of more than 76,000 men under American command. The Japanese Army forced the prisoners on the infamous Bataan Death March, and many - sick, starving and forced to march under a tropical sun - perished. Steele suffered an ordeal of unparalleled cruelty. He documented his experience through drawings during 1244 days in captivity.

The dozens of drawings were smuggled out of the camps, but unfortunately were lost, with the exception of two, when the ship carrying them was bombed. During his year-long recuperation in a Spokane hospital after the war, Steele recreated the lost drawings. They are chilling and evocative of what the POWs endured in their struggle to survive the cruelties of war. This exhibit begins 15 June. It is free to the public and does not require a museum ticket.

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**Reminder:**

**2018 Nimitz Jr. Corps Program:**

21 April: *Weapons of War: Secrets and Science.*
For children 8-13, Free of charge.
Contact Barbara Ford at 830-997-8600, x225 to sign up.

*We are very grateful to Whataburger® for their sponsorship of these programs.*
Our Partnership with the Texas Historical Commission: Working together by agreement as a state agency and a non-profit organization, the THC and Admiral Nimitz Foundation formed a new public/private partnership created to preserve the historic resources of the National Museum of the Pacific War and guide the expansion of the Museum. It is the only institution in the continental United States dedicated exclusively to telling the story of the Pacific Theater battles of World War II.
The Admiral Nimitz Foundation is a 501(c) 3 non-profit foundation eligible for corporate matching grants. Foundation members may forward any forms for matching gift programs with their membership contributions.

The Admiral Nimitz Foundation
328 E. Main St. • Fredericksburg, TX 78624

The Admiral Nimitz Foundation was recently rated Four Star by Charity Navigator -- the leading independent evaluator of non-profit charities in the U.S. A Four Star rating shows exceptional managerial efficiency exceeding industry standard.

Artifacts from the USS Texas Exhibit:

Currently on display in the temporary gallery in the George H.W. Bush Gallery