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Achievements and Gratitude: A Year-End Update from Your Friends of the National World War II Memorial

Thank You for Your 2024 Support – Together, We're Keeping History Alive!



As we close this remarkable year, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support. Your dedication fuels our mission to honor the Greatest Generation, preserve their legacy, and ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten.

2024 Accomplishments—Made Possible by You

This year, the National World War II Memorial in Washington, DC welcomed over 5 million visitors from across the nation and around the globe, serving as a timeless symbol of sacrifice, freedom, and unity.

Greatest Generation Commemorative Coins

In partnership with the United States Mint, we proudly supported the 2024 Greatest Generation Commemorative Coin Program—a tribute to those who defended liberty and democracy. With nearly \$1 million raised, proceeds will help with the Memorial's maintenance, repairs, and educational and commemorative programming, ensuring this sacred site continues to inspire future generations.

Preserving and Enhancing the Memorial

With the support of a \$2 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., Friends successfully restored the Circle of Remembrance and added President Franklin D. Roosevelt's D-Day Prayer in 2023. These enhancements came to life in 2024 through solemn name readings and powerful ceremonies marking the 80th anniversaries of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge. These events reinforced the Memorial's role as a space for reflection, remembrance, and education.

Commemorating the Greatest Generation

Throughout 2024, Friends hosted in-person and virtual ceremonies on V-E Day, Memorial Day, V-J Day, Veterans Day, and Pearl Harbor Day.

We also marked the 80th anniversaries of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge, and celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Memorial's dedication with moving wreath-layings, name readings, and tributes to the 16 million Americans who served during WWII, including the 400,000 who made the ultimate sacrifice.

It was a privilege to welcome dozens of WWII veterans to these commemorations, and we invite you to view these special moments, available on our [website](#).

UNITY Award Presentation

We proudly honored Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, the "Mother of the WWII Memorial," with the 2024 Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Unity Award during the Memorial's 20th Anniversary Commemoration. Her leadership and vision helped make this Memorial a reality. Be sure to watch this inspiring tribute on our [website](#).

Teaching the Lessons of Yesterday to Unite the Generations of Tomorrow

Education remained at the heart of our mission in 2024.

The 9th Annual Summer Teachers Conference empowered educators with tools and resources to inspire service projects and enrich their curricula, fostering a deeper understanding of World War II's lasting impact.

Our Monthly Virtual Conference Series featured WWII veterans, war orphans, authors, and historians, bringing extraordinary WWII stories to life through free, interactive programs. These sessions, available in perpetuity on our [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#), ensure that their lessons continue to educate and inspire future generations.

Classroom visits led by Resident Historian Alex Kershaw reinforced the values of courage, sacrifice, and unity, providing students with engaging, personal insights into WWII history. Friends also expanded learning resources by publishing monthly essays and Top 10 WWII Significance Lists authored by the Resident Historian, offering fresh perspectives on the war's defining moments.

The *Jack C. Taylor / Enterprise Rent-A-Car WWII Memorial Education Endowment* plays a pivotal role in ensuring these programs remain [accessible online](#) for years to come, preserving history and promoting education for future generations.



Haydn Williams WWII Memorial Legacy Lecture

Friends partnered with the National Defense University to host the 12th Annual Haydn Williams WWII Memorial Legacy Lecture featuring acclaimed author John C. McManus and his presentation, "To the End of the Earth: The U.S. Army and the Downfall of Japan." This powerful lecture underscored the enduring relevance of WWII history.

Travel, Connection, and Community

Friends offered two unforgettable travel programs in 2024. The "Victory in Europe" tour took participants to London, Normandy, and Paris, retracing the heroic steps of Allied forces as they liberated Europe. The "Last Battles" tour explored the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, immersing travelers in the final months of the war and the stories of resilience and triumph. Both journeys, led by Friends' Resident Historian Alex Kershaw, provided deeply moving and educational experiences, strengthening connections to the history we are dedicated to preserving. Exciting new tours for 2025 are already in the works!

Friends also partnered with the National Archives to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge with a program featuring [discussions with veterans Colonel Frank Cohn and Harry Miller](#). This powerful event honored their courage and sacrifices, preserving their stories for future generations.

We further preserved WWII stories by recording veteran interviews, celebrating milestone birthdays, and sharing profiles on social media to inspire pride and gratitude.

Our dedicated volunteers remained central to our mission, assisting with ceremonies, name readings, and outreach efforts. Their devotion demonstrated the enduring power of community and remembrance.

Looking Ahead to 2025

As we enter the new year, we remain committed to preserving the legacy of the Greatest Generation, teaching history's lessons, and uniting generations in remembrance and reflection.

Your ongoing support powers our mission and ensures the stories of World War II continue to inspire. If you feel moved to strengthen this effort, we invite you to make a donation today to help us continue our commemorative programs, preserve the Memorial, and educate future generations.

We can't wait to see you—in person or online—at the World War II Memorial in 2025. Together, let's honor the past and inspire the future.

With gratitude and hope,

Your Friends at the National World War II Memorial

Honor Their Legacy—Donate Today!



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