

1942 - Battle of Midway Commemoration - 2001



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International Midway Memorial Foundation (IMMF) members from left to right, retired Capt. Stanford E. Linzey, CHC USN, retired Lt. Cmdr. Lee C. McCleary USN, retired SOC (SS) John R. Abatie, retired Col. William R. Lucius USMC, and Rear Adm. Donald Showers unveil the Midway Atoll National Memorial Flag at a ceremony for the commemoration of the Battle of Midway on the Battleship Missouri Memorial on Saturday.

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so recognize the late Adm. James "Bud" Nance, Helms' chief aide and boyhood friend.

"I know that our dear friend, Adm. Bud Nance is looking down with pride and admiration at what we have accomplished today," wrote Helms. "As you know, it was Bud who alerted the Senate about this important issue in the first place. And it was his inconceivable spirit that helped us overcome each obstacle along the way."

Following Helms' letter, Akaka related his unexpected feelings of pride from before the ceremony when he spoke with servicemembers presently serving in the military who acknowledged that the spirit of those who fought at Midway and at Pearl Harbor lives on. Akaka also noted that the recognition of Midway Atoll as a national memorial was long overdue.

"Recognition of the intrepid value of the badly outnumbered American naval force and the supreme sacrifice made by your fallen comrades, you richly deserve our admiration and gratitude," said Akaka. "As we gather here today, stirred by the echoes of history in this solemn and consecrated place, let us offer prayerful reflection and tribute to all those who have responded to our nation's call in times of need."

The ceremony also featured an historical perspective from retired Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Henry C. Stackpole, vignettes from retired Midway veterans Marine Corps Col. William R. "Bill" Lucius, Lt. Cmdr. Lee C. McCleary and Rear Adm. Donald "Mac" Showers, and music from the Pacific Fleet Band.

The Pacific Fleet Band then performed "The Battle of Midway March," and "Remembrance Hymn" authored by Ambassador J. William Middendorf, II, former Secretary of the Navy. During the performance, Battle of Midway veterans assisted in the unveiling and raising of the Midway Atoll National Memorial flag.

D'Angelo rounded out the ceremony with a reading of the origin of the Midway Atoll National Memorial coin followed by its presentation. The sterling silver coin, was designed by IMMF in March. The coin commemorates the designation of the Midway National Memorial.

On one side is a map of the Midway Atoll that displays a line of latitude and longitude that intersects at the present site of the Midway Memorial Monument on Sand Island. The other side features an inscription and a picture of the monument dedicated by the IMMF in 1995. The inscription reads: "A Nation Honors the Most Decisive Naval Battle in U.S. History."

The event highlighted a week long commemoration with a series of events honoring the Navy's victory in the Battle of Midway. The commemoration began May 29 with a welcoming reception at the Sheraton Moana Surfriider, which featured guest speaker Rear Adm. Robert T. Conway Jr., Commander Navy Region Hawaii/Commander Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific, and concluded with a dinner/dance aboard the Battleship Missouri Memorial Monday night.

The series of events also included a visit to Station Hypo at Bldg. 1 on Naval Station Pearl Harbor for a dedication and unveiling of a plaque commemorating the achievements of the Navy and Marine Corps officers and enlisted who literally invented Pacific Fleet Intelligence.

The Combat Intelligence Unit, which worked from cramped spaces in the basement of Bldg. 1, the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard building during World War II, was responsible for reviewing, plotting and interpreting Japanese intelligence information from radio message traffic. The resulting operational intelligence (OPINTEL) played a decisive role in the defeat of the Japanese Navy at the Battle of Midway, and became an outline, but critical element of intelligence support to the Pacific fleet throughout the end of the war.

In 1999, the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Jay Johnson, designated the Battle of Midway as one of only two official annual commemorations (the other is the Navy Birthday). The first official Midway commemoration began in June 2000.

The IMMF is an organization dedicated to honoring the memory of the Battle of Midway and to preserving its rightful recognition as the turning point in the war against Japan. Over the past nine years, the foundation has placed a monument to the Battle of Midway Atoll, and together with the Naval Academy class of 1942, has erected a monument on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. Its future plans include a National Midway Memorial Monument and War in the Pacific Museum.



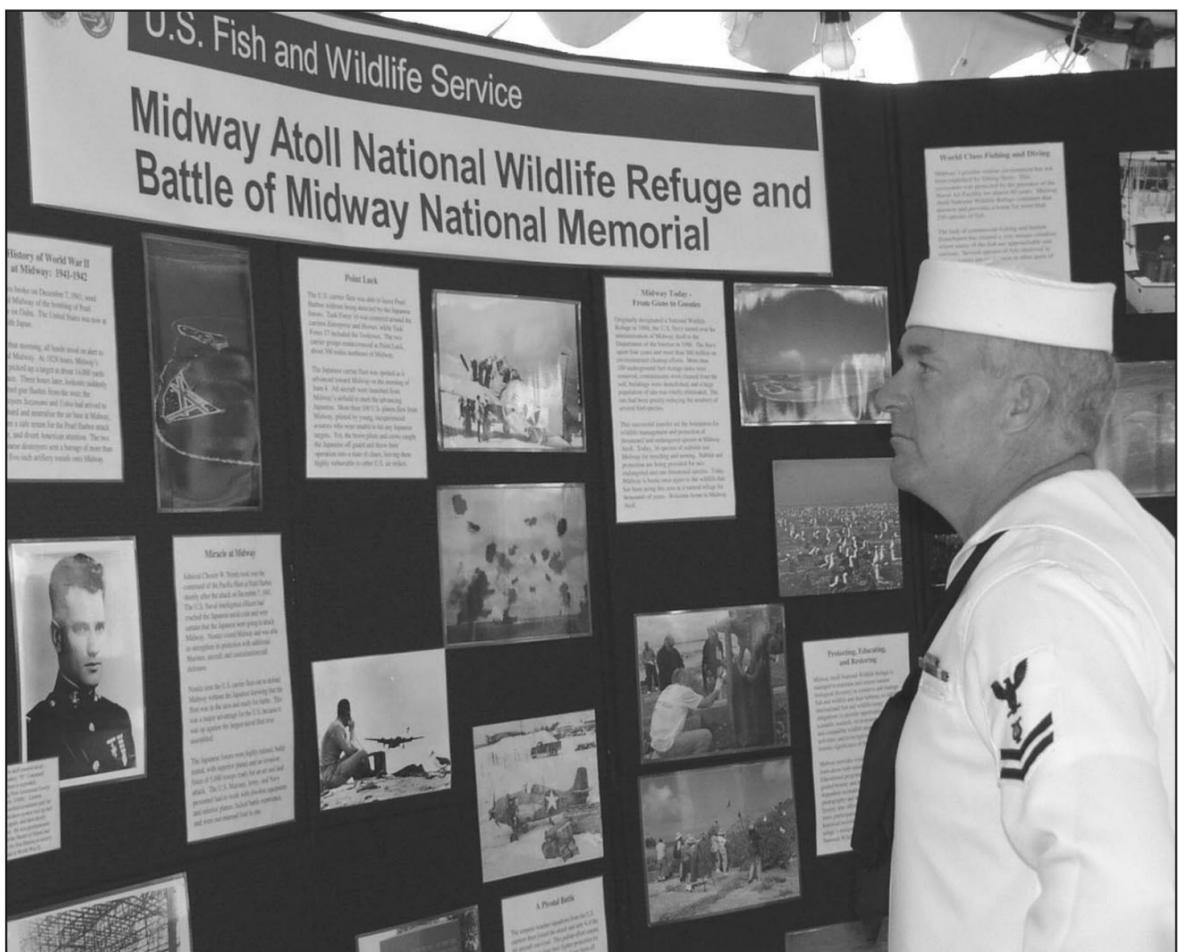
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(Above) A plaque at Bldg. 1, dedicated to the men of Combat Intelligence Unit where Station Hypo was located. The unit was responsible for breaking the Japanese Naval code (JN 25) that enabled Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, Adm. Chester Nimitz to learn of the impending invasion of Midway Island. The breaking of the code allowed Nimitz to make decisions that would win the battle for Midway and turn the tide of the war in favor of the Americans.

(Left) Rear Adm. Donald Showers, former OIC of intelligence at headquarters, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet makes his way down the stairs at Bldg. 1 on the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard where cryptologic technicians were stationed concentrating on breaking the Japanese code.



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A Sailor looks at a display of the events and timeline of the Battle of Midway. The International Midway Memorial Foundation has been dedicated for the last nine years in honoring the Battle of Midway and to preserving its rightful recognition as the turning point in the war against Japan.