

Fort Miles VJ Day Ceremony to Honor Delaware's World War II Fallen and Mark 10th Anniversary of USS *Missouri* Gun Display

LEWES, Del. — At 10:00 am on Wednesday September 2nd, the Fort Miles Historical Association will hold its annual Victory over Japan (VJ) Day Ceremony at historic Fort Miles to honor the **772 Delaware service members who lost their lives during World War II** while commemorating the end of the global conflict and the **10th anniversary of the dedication of the USS *Missouri* gun display** at Fort Miles.

The ceremony will bring together veterans, Gold Star families, active-duty first responders, civic leaders, historians, and members of the public to remember the sacrifices of the Greatest Generation and reflect on the victory that restored peace in 1945. Japan's formal surrender was signed aboard the battleship USS *Missouri* on September 2, 1945, officially bringing World War II to a close.

This year's observance also marks a decade since the dedication of the USS *Missouri* gun display at Fort Miles. Featuring a 16-inch/50-caliber gun from the historic battleship, the exhibit serves as a lasting reminder of the ship aboard which the Instrument of Surrender was signed and stands as a symbol of the courage, sacrifice, and determination of the Americans who served during the war.

A central focus of the ceremony will be the remembrance of the **772 Delaware service members who made the ultimate sacrifice** during World War II. Their names and stories represent communities across the First State whose families answered the nation's call during its greatest time of need. Their service and sacrifice remain an enduring part of Delaware's history and the nation's legacy of freedom.

The program will feature the presentation of the colors, bagpipes, an oral history of the USS Missouri BB-63, the recognition of the FMHA Missouri Gun Campaign Committee members, and a solemn tribute to Delaware's fallen WWII heroes. Moments of reflection and remembrance will honor those whose sacrifices helped secure victory and preserve liberty for future generations.

Located within Cape Henlopen State Park, Fort Miles served as a key coastal defense installation protecting the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic coast during World War II. Today, the restored military site preserves the history of America's home-front defenses while educating visitors about Delaware's contributions to the Allied victory.

"VJ Day is both a celebration of peace and a day of remembrance," organizers said. "As we commemorate the end of World War II, we also honor the 772 Delaware service members who gave their lives in defense of our nation. Their courage, sacrifice, and devotion to duty will never be forgotten. The anniversary of the USS *Missouri* gun display further connects

visitors to the historic events that ended the war and reminds us of the lasting legacy of those who served.”

The public is invited to attend this meaningful ceremony of remembrance, gratitude, and historical reflection. By honoring Delaware’s fallen heroes and commemorating the historic legacy of the USS *Missouri*, the VJ Day Ceremony continues Fort Miles’ mission of preserving the stories of the Delaware men and women whose service helped secure peace and freedom for generations to come.