



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“MIGHTY MO” WELCOMES MILESTONE 500,000TH VISITOR IN 2013

Pearl Harbor, HI – (November 21, 2013) – The Battleship Missouri Memorial today welcomed its 500,000th paid visitor in 2013, achieving a new milestone and fulfilling a major goal set 15 years ago when the retired USS *Missouri* was berthed at its permanent home in Pearl Harbor.

Felix Garcia of Phoenix, Arizona was the 500,000th visitor to the “Mighty Mo” arriving at 2:00 pm. Felix, joined by his wife Erika, was presented with a commemorative USS Missouri coin and official USS Missouri hat by Michael A. Carr, President and COO of the Battleship Missouri Memorial.

Carr commented, “Crossing the half-million mark in visitors for a single year is a significant feat that is a tribute to the tireless dedication and hard work of our employees and volunteers over our first 15 years. The Battleship Missouri Memorial’s popularity reflects its evolution into a magnificent showcase for anyone who appreciates our nation’s history.”

When the *Missouri* was relocated to Pier Foxtrot 5 at Pearl Harbor’s Ford Island in 1998, the board of directors for the USS Missouri Memorial Association put forth a strategic plan with a number of major goals to ensure its long-term viability as a world-class historical attraction. The other goals, such as paying off millions of dollars in bank loans to bring the *Missouri* to Hawaii and placing the battleship in dry-dock for a thorough refurbishment, have all been accomplished.

Welcoming 500,000 paid visitors in a calendar year was the Association’s last major goal to fulfill, and the Battleship Missouri Memorial achieved it for the first time with more than five weeks to spare.

In addition to paid visitors, the Battleship Missouri Memorial also serves as a popular site to host special events and military ceremonies, including re-enlistment, promotion and retirement ceremonies for service members. To date, the *Missouri* has hosted more than 1,000 special events and ceremonies in 2012 – averaging more than three per day.

Stretching three football fields long and standing 20 stories tall from keel to mast, the Mighty Mo was instrumental to victory in major battles of the Pacific, before serving as the memorable site where General Douglas MacArthur and the Allied Forces accepted Imperial Japan’s surrender to end World War II and restore world peace on September 2, 1945. The *Missouri*’s “Surrender Deck” is a must-see site where visitors can stand in the same spot where the ceremony took place ending the war.

Battleship Missouri Memorial

The Battleship Missouri Memorial is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. General admission, which includes choice of an optional tour, is \$22 per adult and \$11 per child (4-12). Military, *kama’aina* (local resident) and school group pricing is available. For information or reservations, call (toll-free) 1-877-644-4896 or visit USSMissouri.org.

The Battleship Missouri Memorial, located a mere ship’s length from the USS Arizona Memorial, completes a historical visitor experience that begins with the “day of infamy” and the sinking of the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor and ends with Imperial Japan’s surrender aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

Following an astounding career that spans five decades and three wars, from World War II to the Korean conflict to the Liberation of Kuwait, the “Mighty Mo” was decommissioned and donated to the USS Missouri Memorial

Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which operates the battleship as a historic attraction and memorial.

The Association oversees her care and preservation with the support of visitors, memberships, grants and the generosity of donors.

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Images provided courtesy of the Battleship Missouri Memorial



Link to image: <http://i.imgur.com/hwdIX8D.jpg>

Caption: Felix Garcia with his wife, Erika (middle), was presented with a commemorative USS Missouri coin and official USS Missouri hat by Michael A. Carr, President and COO of the Battleship Missouri Memorial.



Link to image: <http://i.imgur.com/9VYUI5I.jpg>

Caption: Felix Garcia (left) with wife, Erika (right) under the historic Gun Turret One aboard the USS *Missouri*.

Media Contact:

Patrick Dugan
808-539-3411/808-741-2712
Patrick.Dugan@AnthologyGroup.com

Jaclyn Hawse
(808) 455-1600 x246
JaclynH@ussmissouri.org