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PRESERVATION OF “MIGHTY MO” SUPERSTRUCTURE IS UNDERWAY

*Battleship Missouri Memorial to Remain Open During 42-Week Project;
Repairs being Conducted After Tour Hours*

Pearl Harbor, HI – (March 1, 2017) – With caring for the long-term future of America’s last battleship as its foremost priority, the USS Missouri Memorial Association has initiated a comprehensive preservation of the towering superstructure of the Battleship Missouri Memorial.

A project three years in the planning is scheduled for completion this December. All of the work is being done in the evening hours after the “Mighty Mo” has closed for tours most days.

The vast majority of the normal tour route remains open for guests daily, the only exceptions being the upper navigation bridge and flying bridge, which are presently closed to the public for safety reasons. Tours of the main deck, the famed Surrender Deck where World War II ended, and the interior of the ship are unaffected by the ongoing preservation work.

“This is essential preservation work that has to be done to ensure the USS *Missouri* is being properly maintained so that future generations can better appreciate its impact on world history,” said Michael A. Carr, President and CEO of the USS Missouri Memorial Association. “We have carefully planned this repair work to be done as expeditiously and safely as possible without interrupting the overall tour experience.”

At \$3 million, the repair and preservation of the superstructure is the largest and most expensive project undertaken by the Association since the battleship was placed into dry dock more than seven years ago. The Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, is funding the project entirely on its own, primarily through ticket sales to guests touring the battleship.

“The public, and its ongoing support of this American icon, is making this preservation possible,” said Carr. “We appreciate everyone’s understanding as we complete the work and encourage people to come enjoy an onboard battleship experience available nowhere else in the world.

The superstructure is the tallest section of the Battleship Missouri Memorial rising approximately 110 feet above the main deck, with a mast extending more than 50 feet above the major

structure. The repair and preservation work encompasses the forward fire control tower, forward stack, forward mast, and adjacent components of the battleship.

The repair work involves the sandblasting of nearly 27,000 square feet of steel surface of the superstructure to remove areas that are rusting or have become corroded due to exposure from the salty air and sun. An estimated 17,000 pounds of steel is being replaced. The tallest part of the battleship, the upper section of the forward mast, is being removed and repaired off-site. The superstructure will be completely repainted with protective coatings and rainwater drainage will be improved to support the long-term preservation efforts.

In addition to the repair and preservation work, the Association is installing replicas of two SLQ-32 electronic warfare antennas, as well as a radome involved in the operation of remotely piloted aircraft onto the superstructure. This equipment was part of the USS *Missouri* before its decommissioning in 1992. With the installation of these prominent items, the Association will take a major step to meeting its historical preservation goal of restoring the USS *Missouri* to its overall appearance on December 7, 1991. On that day, the USS *Missouri* participated in the 50th anniversary observance of the attack on Pearl Harbor, culminating the battleship's 48-year operational history during three wars, World War II, the Korean War, and Operation Desert Storm.

By returning the Battleship Missouri Memorial to the former glory of the Mighty Mo prior to its decommissioning, the Association is focused on preserving the past to educate future generations about the USS *Missouri*'s service during peace and war.

About the USS *Missouri* (BB-63)

Class:	Iowa-class battleship
Length:	887 feet
Height:	209 feet from keel to mast
Beam:	108 feet
Weight:	58,000 tons (full load); 45,000 tons (unloaded)
Speed:	In excess of 30 knots (35 mph)

The USS *Missouri*'s keel was laid on January 6, 1941, at the New York Naval Shipyard in Brooklyn. Designing the Missouri took 175 tons of blueprint paper. The ship was built in three years and required over 3 million man-days to complete the job.

The USS *Missouri* was launched January 29, 1944 and commissioned on June 11, 1944. She was assigned to the Pacific Third Fleet and steamed into Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1944.

The *Missouri* was the last battleship ever built and the most formidable. Built for speed and firepower and possessed thick steel armor plating that protected the hull (13.5 inches), the gun turrets (17 inches in front; 13 inches on the sides), the citadel (17 inches), and the conning tower sides (17.3 inches).

The nine 16-inch guns are the Mighty Mo's trademark feature. Each gun barrel is 65 feet long, weighs an incredible 116 tons, and can fire a 2,700-pound shell 23 miles in 50 seconds — with pinpoint accuracy.

World War II: The USS *Missouri* was part of the force that carried out bombing raids over Tokyo and provided firepower in the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The Mighty Mo secured its place in history as the site of Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allied Forces on September 2, 1945, ending World War II. The ceremony to sign the Formal Instrument of Surrender was conducted by Supreme Allied Commander General Douglas A. MacArthur.

Korean War: The Mighty Mo's main battery firepower became legendary in Korea, with her nine 16-inch guns hurling shells as heavy as Volkswagens long-range in defense of U.S. land forces.

Decommissioning: In 1955, the USS *Missouri* was decommissioned and mothballed at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Washington State.

Recommissioning: The USS *Missouri* was recommissioned in 1986 after undergoing an extensive modernization and refurbishment.

Persian Gulf: The Mighty Mo was deployed to the Persian Gulf where it fired its 16-inch guns and launched Tomahawk missiles against Iraqi positions during Operation Desert Storm.

Last mission: The USS *Missouri*'s final operational mission occurred on December 7, 1991, when the battleship led a contingent of ships into Pearl Harbor as part of the commemoration to mark the 50th anniversary of the attack that thrust America into World War II.

Second decommissioning: In 1992, the USS *Missouri* was decommissioned for the second time. In 1995, it was removed from the Navy's ship registry, clearing the way for the battleship to be donated by the Navy for preservation as a memorial museum.

Her legacy: In August 1996, the Navy selected the USS Missouri Memorial Association as caretaker for the battleship and Pearl Harbor as its permanent home. On May 4, 1998, the Navy made it official, transferring the Mighty Mo's care to the association.

About the Battleship Missouri Memorial

Since opening in January 1999, the Battleship Missouri Memorial has attracted more than seven million visitors from around the world with a fascinating tour experience showcasing the USS *Missouri*'s unique place in history. Located a mere ship's length from the USS Arizona Memorial, the Mighty Mo completes a historical visitor experience that begins with the "day of

infamy” and sinking of the USS *Arizona* in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and ends with Japan’s formal surrender aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945.

The USS *Missouri* had an astounding career over five decades and three wars – World War II, the Korean War, and Desert Storm – after which it was decommissioned and donated to the USS Missouri Memorial Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Association operates the Battleship Missouri Memorial as a historic attraction and oversees her care and preservation with the support of visitors, memberships, grants, and donations.

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 \$27 per adult and \$13 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

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