



THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM NEW ORLEANS

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The National World War II Museum marches forward with \$300 million capital campus expansion One of New Orleans' largest current construction projects to quadruple Museum's size, support tourism recovery

NEW ORLEANS (August 27, 2007) – The National World War II Museum, formerly known as the National D-Day Museum, is moving ahead with a \$300 million expansion that will quadruple its size and help lead the renaissance of New Orleans' tourism. The expansion was planned prior to Katrina, and the Museum Board rededicated itself to the project after reopening in December 2006.

Demolition began in early April 2007 on several buildings on the new site. After an archaeological study and a structural test of the building site are completed, construction will begin on a 4-D, advanced format theater scheduled to be opened in early 2009. The theater will have regular showings of *Beyond All Boundaries*, a cinematic experience designed exclusively for the Museum by Director Paul Hettema and Executive Producer Tom Hanks. Through an array of multi-sensory special effects, viewers will be taken on an immersive virtual journey that spans the entirety of World War II.

“This country showed the world what its soldiers and citizens were capable of during World War II. Continuing on with this project will demonstrate that we are as committed to the city's future as we are to preserving the legacy of the Greatest Generation,” said Dr. Gordon “Nick” Mueller, President and CEO of The National World War II Museum. “We are expanding the Museum to be as epic as the war it honors. The National World War II Museum will be one of the great educational and historic institutions of the world.”

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the Museum drew about 300,000 visitors a year. Eighty percent of those visitors were tourists, and as many as 72,000 annual visitors said that the Museum was their primary reason for coming to the city, making the Museum a major destination attraction.

After Hurricane Katrina hit in August of 2005, recovery became the Museum's top priority. However, former Board Chairman, David Voelker, and Mueller, picked up the flag and

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encouraged the board and staff to harness the American Spirit of World War II that the Museum portrays.

The 2007 Victory Ball, an annual fundraiser, signaled the launch of the Museum's nationwide campaign to build the *Liberation and Victory Pavilion* – one of the four main exhibit pavilions that will be constructed as part of the expansion. This Pavilion will feature exhibitions spanning the closing months of the war, the recovery of freedom that came with liberation in 1945, and the fruits of victory that provided lasting benefits for today and tomorrow.

Additional components include a USO venue and restaurant that will be open to the general public (2009). In the U.S. Pavilion, visitors will be able to follow the stories of actual World War II soldiers and experience a simulation of going off to war featuring a real train (2010-2012). There also will be a building dedicated to the great campaigns of World War II, a parade ground and canopy (2010); an Armory and Aviation Pavilion for the Museum's large artifacts like planes and tanks (2013-2014); and a building to house changing exhibits (2013-2014).

Looking beyond the current expansion, additional plans include a hotel, conference center and an on-site parking garage, designed to create a seamless visitor experience.

The Museum's current site highlights the D-Day invasions at Normandy and in the Pacific as well as the Home Front experience. Can't miss artifacts include Higgins Boats, a Sherman Tank, a recently acquired Douglass C-47 with an accompanying exhibit

and a Nazi heavy water barrel (a relic from the race to create the atom bomb) gifted to the Museum by the country of Norway. A changing exhibit space houses special displays related to the Museum's mission.

The National World War II Museum, dedicated in 2000 as The National D-Day Museum, has been designated by Congress as the country's official National World War II Museum. The Museum illuminates the American experience during the war era and celebrates the American spirit, the teamwork, optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who won World War II. For more information on **The National World War II Museum**, visit www.nationalww2museum.org or call 504-527-6012.

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