



USS Arizona Memorial

USS ARIZONA MEMORIAL MUSEUM

PEARL HARBOR, OAHU, HI -- The USS Arizona Memorial Museum is a richly hued tapestry of memories, a moving testimonial to the bravery and honor of those who served and the thousands who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. It is an intrinsic part of the Memorial experience, carrying our focus from the grand scope of a world-changing event down to the most basic level of the individuals who lived and died there.

As they move through the Museum, visitors are drawn smoothly into the pleasant rhythm of pre-war life at Pearl Harbor. Programs for concerts featuring the ship's award-winning big band ... jaunty photographs showing her crewmen at work and play ... and a display case packed with trophies and victory photos. Perhaps the most haunting of all are the chatty letters written to the folk' back home. Together, they weave a visual memoir of shipboard life, in a time of peace.

In stark contrast to these casual and happy mementos, there are other reminders of the sadder events of December 7th. There's a dramatic model of the Japanese aircraft carrier, *IMS Akagi*, flagship of the deadly attack force. Another model shows the *USS Arizona* as she appeared before the attack. Visitors admire the proud vessel, and at the same time suddenly sense the magnitude of the destructive force that sent her to the bottom in just nine minutes. In other displays, fragments of Japanese warplanes and photos of a beached mini-sub carry visitors through the Museum on a wave of recognition and remembrance. There's even the twisted metal remains of a Japanese torpedo that was headed towards Battleship Row before it got lodged in the ocean's silt, saving perhaps hundreds of sailors from its massive blow of destruction.

Along the way, there are also oversized photographic murals showing the fury of the raging fires that burned for days along Battleship Row. Even after more than a half-century, these and other eyewitness pictures of the attack – some even taken by Japanese pilots – clearly convey the tragic tale.

This Museum weaves an eloquent tale of life and death, of honor, bravery, courage and loss. It's a wrenching human drama that holds visitors enthralled. For those too young to remember, the Museum establishes an important link to the history of the attack. Perhaps for the first time, they experience the real story. The exhibits include telegrams of condolence -- small pieces of paper carefully preserved for decades by families with nothing else left to connect them to their loved ones. In another case, a row of medals gleams softly in mute testament to the bravery of a young sailor who gave his life for his country. The families of these fallen sailors have graciously donated all of these precious keepsakes to the *USS Arizona* Memorial, so they can be displayed for the world to see.

The Arizona Memorial Museum is a powerful tribute to the men who gave their lives on December 7th during the attack on Pearl Harbor and the Pacific War. It holds within its walls the memory of great camaraderie, stunning heroism and ultimately unspeakable loss. It delivers a message that transcends

nations and generations – peace is a precious gift and we must steadfastly preserve the memory and honor of those who fought to secure it.

The USS *Arizona* Memorial was dedicated on Memorial Day 1962 to commemorate the attack on Pearl Harbor and the men who died defending it. In 1989, the USS *Arizona* was designated a national historic landmark. Since 1980, the National Park Service has operated the Memorial and the Visitor Center to ensure the preservation and interpretation of the tangible historical resources associated with the attack – including the rich and vivid memories of its survivors. Veterans have always played a key part in maintaining this historic site. In fact, funding for the USS *Arizona* Memorial is provided in part by the Arizona Memorial Museum Association, a group of Pearl Harbor survivors and others interested in preserving this important legacy.

Each year, the USS *Arizona* Memorial welcomes more than 1.4 million visitors from around the world. To accommodate its international and out-of-state visitors, the Park has brochures written in 27 different languages including English, as well as an audio program which is currently offered in English, German, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese.

The USS *Arizona* Memorial Visitor Center is located adjacent to Kamehameha Highway, near the Aloha Stadium, between Ford Island Bridge and Pearl Harbor's Makalapa Gate. To reach the USS Arizona Memorial from Waikiki, take the H-1 Freeway to the Airport Viaduct and follow the signs to the Arizona Memorial Exit 15A.

The Visitor Center is open 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. every day except Thanksgiving, December 25 and New Year's Day, with tours beginning every 15 minutes, and the last program starting at 3:00 p.m. Admission is free and tours are given on a first-come, first-serve basis. Reservations are not accepted. If you have questions, you can access recorded information at (808) 422-0561. To reach a National Park Service representative, call (808) 422-2771. To contact the Arizona Memorial Museum Association, call (808) 422-5664 or (808) 422-5905. The web site address for the USS Arizona Memorial is www.nps.gov/usar, while the address for the Arizona Memorial Museum Association is <http://www.arizonamemorial.org>.

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