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Presidio Deepens Legacy as a Place of Maritime Remembrance

Merchant Mariners of World War II Newly Honored at West Coast Memorial on National Maritime Day

San Francisco, CA (May 22, 2025) — In the heart of the [Presidio](#) – a former Army post turned national park site – history, memory, and honor converged today as U.S. Merchant Mariners lost in the Pacific in World War II were formally recognized for the first time at the World War II [West Coast Memorial](#).

Perched high above the Pacific, the solemn ceremony took place on National Maritime Day, bringing full circle the Presidio's long role as a place of refuge and remembrance for seafarers. Hosted by the American Battle Monuments Commission and American Merchant Marine Veterans, the event unveiled a new inscription at the memorial and included a wreath-laying in tribute to those who died while safeguarding vital wartime supply lines across the Pacific Ocean.

"For more than a century, the Presidio was a place of refuge for merchant seamen from around the world," said Presidio Trust Board Chair Mark Buell. "We are proud to continue honoring their legacy today."

That legacy runs deep into the Presidio's landscape. Nearby, the historic U.S. Marine Hospital, established in the Presidio in 1875, once provided care to sick and disabled merchant mariners, Coast Guard members, and refugees—all at no cost. It later was renamed the Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, conducting pioneering research on diseases contracted at sea. Though the hospital closed in 1981, the building lives as Presidio Landmark, a restored centerpiece of the 36-acre Public Health Service District, which received the Governor's Historic Preservation Award in 2014.

Beneath the soil just beyond the hospital, lies the Marine Cemetery where more than 500 mariners from 43 countries were buried between 1881 and 1912. Covered by landfills and forgotten over the years, the site was rediscovered in 1989. In 2011, the Presidio Trust unveiled the [Marine Cemetery Vista](#), overlooking tranquil, restored dune habitat. It now stands as a sacred space of reflection—where nature and remembrance meet.

With historic military buildings, cemeteries, and [landmarks](#), the Presidio is a National Historic Landmark and national park site that invites millions of annual visitors to reflect on America's military and maritime past. Through living landscapes and carefully preserved historic sites, it continues to tell the stories of service, sacrifice, and resilience that shaped our nation.

For additional information on the event please visit:

[American Battle Monuments Commission](#); [American Merchant Marine Veterans](#)

About the Presidio and the Presidio Trust

The Presidio is a National Historic Landmark and one of America's most visited national park sites.

Located within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, it is the ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone and was once a military installation under three flags.

Spanning nearly 1,500 acres next to San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, the Presidio is among the most biologically diverse parks in America. Its facilities have been reinvented as museums, restaurants, hotels, homes, and offices. The Presidio Trust is the federal agency that stewards the Presidio, in partnership with the National Park Service and with support from the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. The Trust sustains the Presidio by leasing homes and workplaces and offering visitor amenities. Learn more at [presidio.gov](https://www.presidio.gov) and [@presidiosf](https://www.instagram.com/presidiosf).

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