



# NATIONAL MUSEUM *of the* UNITED STATES NAVY

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **“Far From Home: Reflections of World War II” to Honor Wartime Heroes** *75th Anniversary Exhibit Opens on the U.S. Navy’s Birthday, October 13*

WASHINGTON — Marking the 75th anniversary of World War II, the National Museum of the United States Navy presents *Far From Home: Reflections of World War II*. This exhibit pairs 25 vivid paintings by acclaimed maritime artist Tom Freeman with first-hand accounts of wartime experiences to honor the memory of those who served their country. *Far From Home* will open on the U.S. Navy’s 242nd birthday, October 13, 2017, and close on February 18, 2018. The show will be on display in the museum’s temporary art gallery located at the historic Washington Navy Yard at 805 Kidder Breese Street, SE. The National Museum of the United States Navy is free and open to the public.

Hearing their nations call, men and women put aside their civilian careers to swell the ranks of the Navy. Their naval service took them far from home exposing them to new places and unforgettable dangers. This exhibit shares their extraordinary words depicting their wartime experiences. One painting in the exhibit, “A New Home” depicts the Destroyer Escort USS *Mason* which along with the Subchaser *PC-1264* were chosen and commissioned with majority African American crews including officers. The performance of these Sailors and all African Americans who served in World War II, leads to President Harry Truman integrating the armed services in 1948.

“All the boys on the *Mason* were raised right here in this country, in the United States, and we couldn’t even go to a movie show or sit down at a counter in Woolworth’s even. We had to go around to the back. And the next thing you know, we were on the ship, and we were scared. Then we went to Ireland, and the Irish people didn’t look on us as our skin color. They looked on us as Americans—as American fighting men,” said Seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class William Bland III about his time on the USS *Mason*.

As an extension to this commemorative exhibit, the museum seeks to archive written perspectives. Utilizing the “Letters to the Museum” distance learning program, museum educators will collect personal stories from World War II veterans to give insight on their involvement in the war effort. Relatives and friends are also encouraged to share stories as communicated to them from veterans that served in the war. These personal accounts should be

mailed to the National Museum of the United States Navy, c/o: Letters to the Museum at 805 Kidder Breese Street, SE, Washington, D.C. 20374-5060. Anything sent to the Museum may be used as part of its future educational programming. Supplemental educational packets relating to the exhibit will also be available for visitors.

For more information about the National Museum of the United States Navy, visit [www.history.navy.mil/nmusn](http://www.history.navy.mil/nmusn).

### **ABOUT TOM FREEMAN**

Tom Freeman's paintings are well known all over the world. He is best known for his depictions of stunning naval scenes. His professional art career began after he left the US Marine Corps in 1977. Mr. Freeman's work has appeared on many magazines such as Readers Digest, Popular Mechanics, Boating, Yachting, Business Week, and even TV Guide. Many of his original paintings and limited edition prints hang in the White House, Vatican City, Arizona Memorial in Honolulu, Hawaii, Immigration/Clandestine and Naval Museum in Haifa, and many other places of note. He has done work for the National Parks Service and many corporations throughout the world. Freeman was selected as the first artist-in-residence to the United States Naval Institute.

### **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY**

The National Museum of the United States Navy (NMUSN) collects, preserves, displays, and interprets historic naval artifacts and artwork to inform, educate, and inspire naval personnel and the general public. The NMUSN was established in 1961 and opened to the public in 1963. As an official Department of the Navy museum under the Naval History and Heritage Command, the National Museum of the United States Navy is the only Navy museum to present an overview of U.S. naval history 1775 to the present. Permanent and temporary exhibitions commemorate the Navy's wartime heroes and battles as well as its peacetime contributions in exploration, diplomacy, navigation and humanitarian service. The NMUSN is free and open to the public.

### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

The National Museum of the United States Navy (NMUSN), located at 805 Kidder Breese Street in the historic Washington Navy Yard in South East DC, is free and open to the public. NMUSN is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekends and holidays; closed on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving; Christmas Eve and Day. For more information about visiting the museum, and requirements for access, visit [www.history.navy.mil/nmusn](http://www.history.navy.mil/nmusn). For general information, call 202-433-4882 or email [navymuseum@navy.mil](mailto:navymuseum@navy.mil).

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*Note to Media: Details on the opening reception are forthcoming.*