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The mission of the Mare Island Heritage Trust is to protect, preserve, restore, manage, interpret, promote as a destination and provide for an engaging visitor experience of the open space, historic, cultural and natural resources of Mare Island and its vicinity. Along with public and private sector partners the Mare Island Heritage Trust ensures adequate funding, maintenance and public support of its purposes. The Mare Island Heritage Trust engages in comprehensive planning and the implementation of initiatives and educational and recreational programming for the public experience and enjoyment of an array of unique natural and built areas of Mare Island and its vicinity.

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EVENT ADVISORY

For immediate release

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The Lost Boats of Mare Island Memorial

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http://www.mareislandpreserve.org/Visit_Mare_Island/

[Mare_Island_Events_Lost_Boats_Memorial.html](http://www.mareislandlostboats.org)

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Tribute Coincides with Fleet Week To Honor 575 Crewmen of Mare Island Built Submarines Lost During World War II

Former Navy WWII submarine berth a fitting place for wreath-laying to honor crewmen of the seven lost submarines of Mare Island

VALLEJO, CA – An afternoon of memorial services to honor the 575 crewmen of Mare Island built submarines lost during WWII will take place on Mare Island, Sunday, October 10, 2010. This is the fourth year that organizers have held the Lost Boats memorial program on or near the anniversary of the loss at sea of the USS Wahoo. “Our Lost Boats Memorial happens to fall on Fleet Weekend when Navy presence is heightened throughout the Bay. We hope people will join us in honoring these men who gave their lives during WWII in service of the Navy and the people of this nation”, said Lost Boats Memorial Co-founder and Organizer Myrna Hayes.

The Mare Island Heritage Trust is a California Nonprofit Corporation and a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization Fed. Tax ID # 27-1493661

The free events on Mare Island begin with a flag raising at 1pm at Morton Field named in honor of the Commander of the USS Wahoo, one of the 7 vessels and their crews now “on eternal patrol”. A program of music and history is planned from 2:00 to 3:00pm with a wreath-laying ceremony at Berth 6, the historic dock where submarines were repaired during WWII, with a reception following at Quarters C, 832 Walnut Ave. on Mare Island. The featured presenter for the history portion of the program will be Yountville resident Larry Maggini, a former submarine combat systems engineer at Mare Island Naval Shipyard until the base closure in 1996. He now works on Mare Island for the Navy’s environmental remediation contractor, Weston Solutions, Inc. a founding sponsor of the USS Wahoo and Lost Boats of Mare Island Memorial events. Mr. Maggini has researched and compiled a book on which his presentation is based, entitled “On Eternal Patrol—The Lost Boats of Mare Island”. The book will be available for sale in print and DVD version.

The U.S. Navy submarine force went to war against the Japanese Empire in December 1941 with orders to “...conduct unrestricted submarine warfare...”. By the end of World War II in September 1945, it had sunk a significant portion of the Japanese Navy and virtually wiped out their merchant fleet, effectively strangling the island nation. Success, however, came at a heavy price. Fifty-two of the 325 U.S. submarines that departed on war patrols during World War II were declared “overdue, presumed lost”. Their 3,500 crewmen today remain on what surviving shipmates reverently term “eternal patrol”, their final resting places in most cases known only to God.

Seven of the twenty-three submarines built at Mare Island that took part in World War II combat operations were among the fifty-two that never came home: USS Pompano (SS-181), USS Swordfish (SS-193), USS Gudgeon (SS-211), USS Trigger (SS-237), USS Wahoo (SS238), USS Tullibee (SS-284), and USS Tang (SS-306). For more than 63 years the final resting places of the lost boats and their crews had remained unknown. Then, in October 2006, the Navy confirmed that USS Wahoo, lost at sea on October 11, 1943 with her crew of eighty men, had been located in La Perouse Strait off the Japanese island of Hokkaido. The Lost Boats of Mare Island Memorial services are scheduled to take place the day before the 67th anniversary of Wahoo’s loss.

The memorial service at Historic Berth 6 on Mare Island, will honor the 575 crewmen of the Mare Island submarines lost during WWII, including USS Wahoo. The service will provide an opportunity for those in attendance to share memories and recollections. Chaplain John Berger, USN (ret) will officiate at the wreath-casting, where a hand-made wreath made by volunteers from materials found on Mare Island will be placed for each of the 7 boats built at Mare Island and lost at sea during WWII. The tradition of the playing of Taps and Amazing Grace will conclude the service. The memorial will also recognize all members of the submarine force and especially those lost in submarines. “We have a privilege and responsibility to remember the lost crewmen and to honor all of those who have served our country in the submarine force. And as importantly, we owe the men and women who built and maintained ships such as these 7 submarines at Mare Island a debt of gratitude,” said Myrna Hayes, Lost Boats of Mare Island Memorial organizer.

In Larry Maggini’s photo narrative book he cites a quote by the historian Fletcher Pratt who wrote: "There is a poetry in ships' names. It can still be heard in the quiet watches of the night..., when mist obscures the waterfront and foghorns call mournfully through the darkness. Out across the bay, blinking lights mark the channel down which Navy ships have sailed for a hundred years, and bells sound a knell for those that never came back." “The

names of Mare Island's lost boats are honored names—Pompano, Swordfish, Gudgeon, Trigger, Wahoo, Tullibee, and Tang. Some were old and some were new, but the sweat and the skill and the steel of Mare Island were a part of each of them to the end. The memories of them will live so long as the bells still toll. I hope you will join us once again on October 10 to remember the crewmen of our lost boats”, said Larry Maggini.

The Lost Boats of Mare Island Memorial is hosted by the Mare Island Heritage Trust, whose mission is to work within the community of Vallejo and throughout the region to raise the public's awareness of, and access to, Mare Island. Organizers of the Lost Boats Memorial have hosted the annual San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival for the past 14 years, the Daffodil Tea—that informs the public about the restoration needs of St. Peter's Chapel, and the Mare Faire and 2nd Saturday Access Days at the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve, a planned regional park at the southern end of Mare Island.

The Lost Boats Memorial service planned at Mare Island is free of charge and will be followed by a reception held nearby. It is a rain or shine event. The dockside service will be under a tent. If planning to attend, dress for all possible weather including hot midday sun, cool skies and even rain or fog and bring an umbrella to shield from sun or possible rain at the 1pm Morton Field program. Current information about the planned memorial can be found at http://www.mareislandpreserve.org/Visit_Mare_Island/Mare_Island_Events_Lost_Boats_Memorial.html For more information about the individual boats and historic Mare Island photos visit www.mareislandlostboats.org or call 707-557-9816 or 707-249-9633.

Organizers gratefully acknowledge the support of Vallejo Rugby Club for use of Morton Field during an actual game time, the WWII Landing Craft Support Gunboat LCS-102 for use of Berth 6 for the memorial and wreath-laying service and Lennar Mare Island for their contribution of Quarters C in which the reception is held.

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