



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

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Memorial Site  
3 Overlord Circle  
Bedford, VA 24523  
(800) 351-DDAY

**NATIONAL  
D-DAY  
MEMORIAL**  
BEDFORD, VA



Foundation Office  
133 W Main St.  
P.O. Box 77  
Bedford, VA 24523  
(540) 586-3329

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## Our Mission:

The National D-Day Memorial Foundation's mission is to preserve the lessons and legacy of D-Day. The Foundation maintains and operates the National D-Day Memorial in direct support of that educational mission. In so doing, the Foundation (1) ensures the integrity and security of our nation's memorial to the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of the Allied Forces on D-Day, 6 June 1944; (2) promotes recognition of the character traits undergirding the Allied effort on D-Day; and (3) sponsors commemorations, programs, projects, and exhibitions that foster appreciation of D-Day's historical and residual significance.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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National D-Day  
Memorial Foundation



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Senior VP of Engineering  
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MG Mari K. Eder  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### April Cheek-Messier

In the 23 years since the Memorial's dedication, this year was one of our most impactful yet. With five days of events, we commemorated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day, specifically recognizing the 23 WWII veterans we were honored to host at the Memorial. A record-breaking number of students visited the site for field trips. The Medal of Honor Garden and the Ridgway-Deming Walking Trail were dedicated, along with bronze plaques honoring Medal of Honor recipient 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jimmie Monteith and a plaque that recognized the role of destroyers on D-Day and during the war.

Perhaps one of our greatest achievements this year was the addition of 16 more names to our Memorial wall honoring those killed on D-Day, 6 June 1944. The Necrology Project of the National D-Day Memorial began in 2000, before the Memorial site was even open, with the goal of identifying by name every Allied soldier, sailor, airman or coastguardsman who died on D-Day.

At that time, there was no such list or accurate count of those killed on D-Day, much less an authoritative roster listing the names of the fallen. Estimates varied widely. Memorial staff member Carol Tuckwiller, (now retired) painstakingly tracked down and perused burial records, after-action reports, personnel files, unit histories, ship logs, headstone applications, and hometown obituaries, among many other sources to determine who died in Normandy on June 6. Over the better part of a decade, her research yielded more than 4,000 names of Allied service members and after her retirement, the research continued and continues still with additional names added to the roster when evidence is sufficient to do so. We are the only organization in the world to embark on this endeavor, collecting the names of both Americans and Allies who lost their lives on 6 June 1944.

This year marked our largest revision to our Necrology roll of honor since the original plaques were completed, and we were humbled to recognize their valor, fidelity and sacrifice eight decades after they gave their lives.

Every single name on our wall reminds us of a life, a family member, friend, husband, brother, sweetheart who made the supreme sacrifice to ensure freedom for the world. Their names matter - each and every one. This year was a reminder that we will not stop until every record has been checked, every discrepancy resolved, and every name honored. They deserve nothing less.

To paraphrase George Patton, let us not mourn their passing, let us give thanks that such heroes have lived. At the Memorial, we will continue to tell their stories and the stories of all those who made our freedom possible. We thank our supporters for helping us continue this important work and we look forward to what the new year will bring. Thank you.

Wishing you all the best,



April Cheek-Messier  
President and CEO  
National D-Day Memorial Foundation

# YEAR AT A GLANCE

Thanks to the tireless work of volunteers and staff, as well as financial supporters worldwide, the National D-Day Memorial has continued to flourish. New milestones were reached, including a record number of field trips, new highs in attendance, and global achievements for our podcast, website, and mobile app. The Memorial also continued daily work toward achieving our mission of preserving the stories of D-Day and World War II for future generations.

We acquired important artifacts, cultivated relationships with members and donors, prioritized high-quality educational offerings, and continued to share this vital history with tens of thousands of people.



56,016 on-site visitors



95,662 reached through virtual programming



79 volunteers serving 10,349 hours - saving the Memorial \$346,000



9,195 students directly educated through virtual and in-person programming

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Memorial hosted numerous events throughout the year, including:

## September 2-11, 2023: Poppy Peace Garden

Commemorating the 78th anniversary of the end of World War II, volunteers placed over 4,400 red poppies—one for each Allied fatality on D-Day—alongside our *Le Monument Aux Morts* sculpture as a visual tribute to the victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks, as well as all service members who sacrificed their lives for the freedoms we enjoy today.

## November 11, 2023: Veterans Day

Hundreds gathered to honor our Nation's veterans with keynote speaker Major General Mari K. Eder.

## December 1-3, 2023: Flames of Memory

Arranged throughout the Memorial's grounds, thousands of luminarias shone in recognition of Overlord's fallen. This moving visual display, hosted annually, pays tribute to the ultimate sacrifice each service man made to relight the lamp of freedom.

## March 24, 2024: Medal of Honor Garden Dedication

The Memorial dedicated the new Medal of Honor Garden, paying tribute to the four Medal of Honor recipients from D-Day. Special tribute was paid to 1st Lt. Jimmie W. Monteith Jr., a son of Virginia and member of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, killed in action on June 6, 1944. Members of the VT Corps of Cadets were present to pay their respects.

## May 27, 2024: Memorial Day

The Foundation honored the memories of three heroes of D-Day with the addition of their names to the Memorial Wall; John Norbert "Jack" Murphy, Harvey Edgar Jones, and Richard N. Hoag. Guest speakers shared their heroic stories with the crowd.

## June 5-9, 2024: 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day

The National D-Day Memorial commemorated this historic anniversary with four days of public events. See page 6 for details!

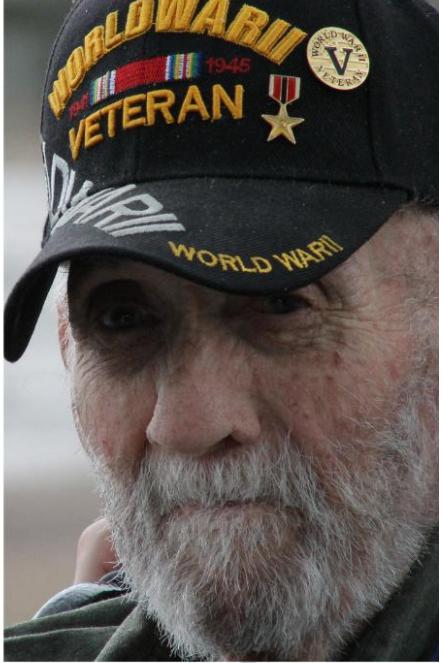
## June 24-28, 2024: WWII Day Camp

Rising 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders discovered how science helped the Allies win World War II. They also had a unique opportunity to tour the Memorial's newest addition—a genuine Higgins boat!





EVERY STORY LIVES ON



# EVERY STORY LIVES ON:

## The 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day Commemoration



More than 8,000 people attended in-person Memorial events in honor of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day June 5-9, 2024. More than 12,000 individuals viewed our online streaming and countless more watched live coverage of the ceremony on C-SPAN.

Events kicked off with a luncheon at Banker Aviation on June 5. This was a great chance for sponsors and D-Day Society members to thank the WWII veterans who were able to attend and get an up-close and personal look at the aircraft poised to take part in the June 6 ceremony.

The June 6 ceremony included a recognition of veterans, guest speakers including Governor Glenn Youngkin, dignitaries, music, flyovers, and more. Twenty-three D-Day and World War II veterans participated, along with representatives from each of the Allied nations.

June 7 and 8 featured patriotic concerts preceding the premiere of *When We Went In: The D-Day Experience in Light and Sound*. This event transformed the Memorial into an immersive D-Day experience, a unique and transfixing event for all.

Events wrapped up on June 9 with a WWII style field chapel service.

This series of events was a fantastic way to honor the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of our D-Day and WWII veterans. Many thanks to the Board of Directors, sponsors, volunteers, and donors who helped us ensure that "Every Story Lives On" through this incredible commemoration.



# BIG NEWS



NDDMF President & CEO April Cheek-Messier (L) with the Telly Award and Frameless Technologies, LLC CEO Michaela Riva Gaaserud (R) with the Communicator Award

## MEMORIAL WINS TWO MAJOR AWARDS FOR TECHNOLOGY

The National D-Day Memorial Mobile App was awarded a 2024 Communicator Award for Best User Experience while the Memorial's online Artifact Virtual Gallery is a 2024 Telly Award Bronze Winner for Use of Volumetric Capture — Immersive, Interactive, & Mixed. The Foundation partnered with Frameless Technologies, LLC to design and build the mobile app. Both international awards recognize the Memorial's technological innovations as we strive to find new ways to share the stories of D-Day and World War II.

## NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL RECOGNIZED AS TOP 10% OF "THINGS TO DO" WORLDWIDE!

Tripadvisor recognized the National D-Day Memorial in the Travelers' Choice Awards for 2024. The award honors businesses that consistently earn great reviews, placing them among the top 10% of listings around the world on Tripadvisor.



## BEDFORD NAMED VIRGINIA'S WWII HERITAGE CITY

In recognition of the community's importance to the war effort, the National Park Service has named Bedford the "World War II Heritage City" for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Only one World War II Heritage City is designated per state, and Bedford is among other impactful locales such as New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Wilmington, and Oak Ridge. The National D-Day Memorial Foundation, Bedford County, the Town of Bedford, and regional history organizations worked on the nomination for the community. The submission highlighted the disproportionate losses of Bedford on D-Day, the local industries and farms that contributed to the war economy, and the service and sacrifices many sons and daughters of Bedford made to achieve victory.

## RIDGWAY-DEMING WALKING TRAIL COMPLETED

This pet-friendly, wheelchair-accessible, one-mile walking trail features 7 education stations to educate guests on the importance and use of Virginia's natural resources during World War II. A scavenger hunt is available for school age audiences. Thunderbolt, the trail's canine mascot, guides our younger visitors on their journey.



# PODCAST

## **SOMEONE TALKED! IS A GLOBAL SUCCESS!**



15,502 downloads

Top 10% of global podcasts

The Memorial's official podcast recently hit the top 10% of most popular shows globally, out of more than 3 million podcasts.

The ranking is from Listen Notes, the most comprehensive online podcast database.

With more than 50 episodes, the podcast has featured incredible guests such as James Holland, Peter Caddick-Adams and Paul Woodadge. April Cheek-Messier, John Long, and host Dr. John C. McManus have reached listeners in over 25 countries!



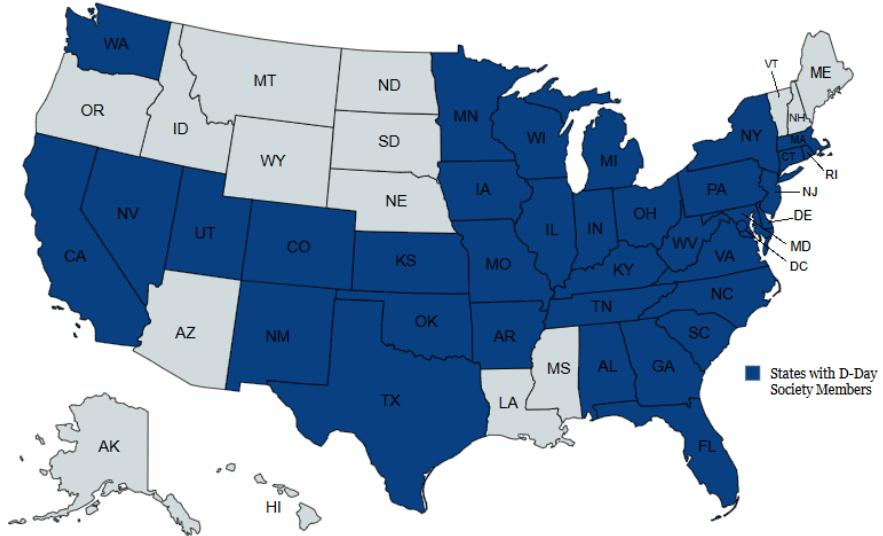
Countries shaded in red have had podcast listeners!

# GLOBAL SUPPORT

- Annual operating budget of \$3 million
- Supporters from all 50 states, Guam, & the U.S. Virgin Islands

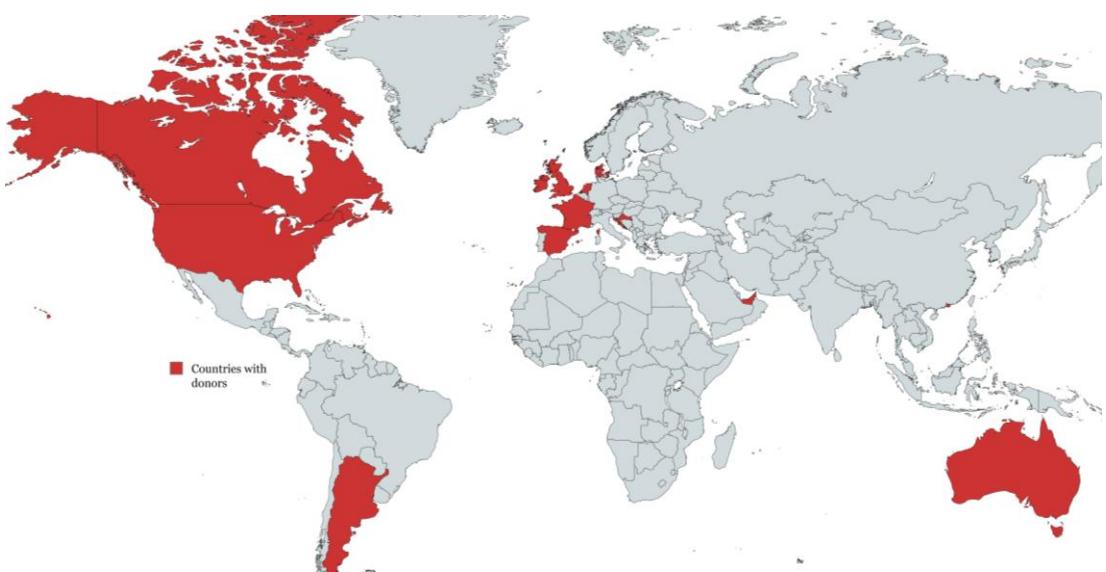
## D- DAY SOCIETY MEMBERS FROM 35 STATES, D.C., CANADA, & FRANCE

## DONORS WITH \$1,000+ ANNUAL CUMULATIVE GIVING:



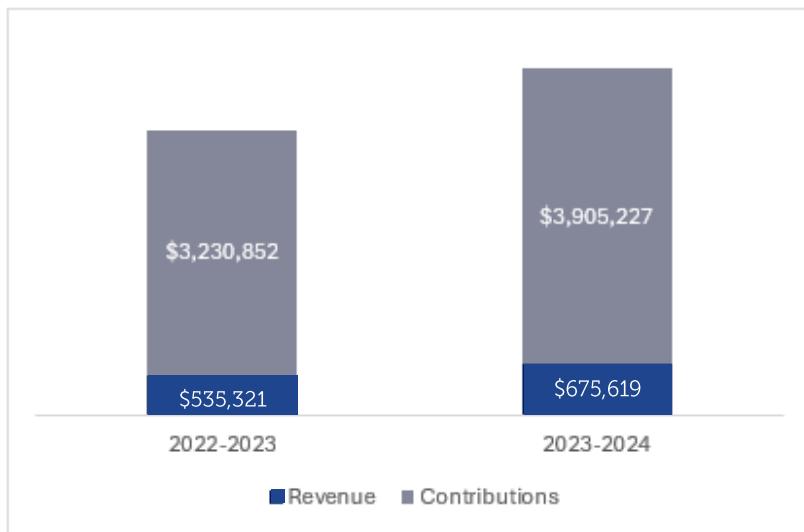
## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORTERS IN

Argentina  
Australia  
Canada  
Croatia  
Denmark  
France  
Hong Kong  
Ireland  
The Netherlands  
Spain  
United Arab Emirates  
United Kingdom



# FINANCIAL STANDING

## Revenue and Contributions



	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>Total Support**</b>	\$4,043,891*	\$5,137,596

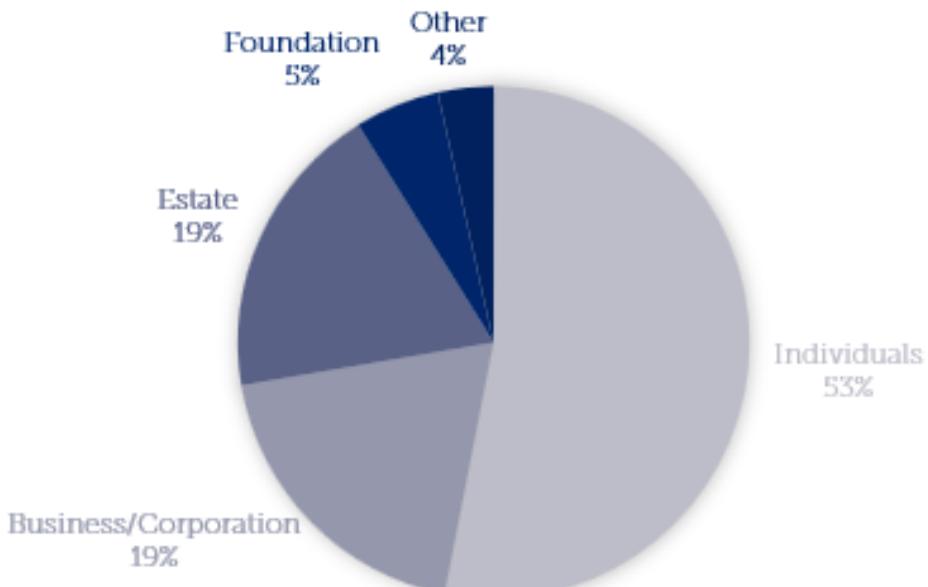
\*Includes grants receivable

\*\*Revenue + Contributions + Investment Gains/Losses = Total Support

## Assets

	Beginning of Fiscal Year	End of Fiscal Year
<b>Net Assets</b>	\$19,621,819	\$21,047,397

## SUPPORT GIVEN BY:



# WHAT'S NEXT?

In the coming years, we look forward to the fulfillment of the next steps of our Capital Campaign.



# VISION TO BUILD

The 2023-2024 fiscal year brought us even closer to embarking on new stages of our capital campaign. The coming years will see additions that will enhance visitor experience, promote sustainability, and provide greater opportunities to educate and engage the public.

## Key Projects on the Horizon



### HIGGINS BOAT EXHIBIT

We have a unique opportunity to make the Memorial the permanent home to a rare artifact that defined D-Day: an authentic Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel (LCVP)—the iconic “Higgins boat” of WWII. In addition to purchasing the Higgins boat to guarantee its preservation, the Memorial plans to build a shelter to protect it from the elements and create an outdoor exhibit highlighting the role of LCVP’s during WWII.

### ROBINS PERFORMANCE AMPHITHEATER

The amphitheater’s primary function is to provide an alternate venue to holding events on the main plaza. With a capacity for over 1500 guests in terraced and lawn seating, this space will allow the Memorial many more opportunities to host veteran and community groups and to add to educational programming currently offered. The amphitheater will be outfitted for lectures, concerts, and performances, with a covered stage and ADA accessibility.



### DORIS AND JOHN FOWLER FAMILY

#### MOTOR POOL

The motor pool, equipped with an event deck overlooking the Amphitheater, will serve as additional exhibit, event, and temporary office space for the growing National D-Day Memorial Foundation. It will also function as the future home of the Lee Holland Collection, a series of immaculately restored World War II vehicles.





## What is the D-DAY SOCIETY?

The D-Day Society is an extraordinary group of dedicated individuals and businesses who contribute \$1,000 or more per year to the Memorial and serve as our most trusted advisors and friends.

Members of the D-Day Society represent 35 states, with the greatest number of members coming from Virginia, Florida, California, Texas, and Tennessee.

### Founder's Circle \$50,000+

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 Framatome  
 Estate of Edward T. Mack  
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 Bank of The James  
 Liberty University  
 BWX Technologies, Inc.  
 L3Harris Technologies  
 The Boardman Family Foundation

### Chairman's Circle \$25,000-\$49,999

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 Mr. Charles T. Walker  
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 Mr. & Mrs. Russell Harper  
 Mr. and Mrs. Frederick T. Scruggs, Jr.

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 Ms. Shelia Balderson

Mr. Dave Lagasse and Ms. Jen Kohn  
 Mr. Vincent C. Stone  
 Mr. and Mrs. G. K. Sutton  
 Destination Bedford  
 Financial Designs  
 Fostek Corporation  
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 The Titmus Foundation Inc.

**Commanders \$5,000- \$9,999**

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 Member One Federal Credit Union  
 Town of Bedford  
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**Patriots \$1,000 -\$2,499**

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## Chair of the D-Day Society, George Patton "Pat" Waters



George Patton "Pat" Waters was born in New York City on January 18, 1941 to General John K. Waters and Beatrice Patton Waters, the first-born daughter of General and Mrs. George S. Patton Jr. He graduated from Pfeiffer College in North Carolina in 1965 and enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve that same year, attending Officer Candidate's School. He served aboard the destroyer USS Braine as Combat Information Officer for a three-year tour of the Western Pacific and as an instructor in Anti-Submarine Warfare at Glynco (GA) Naval Air Station. Following his naval service, he worked as an executive in a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Louisiana before starting

Waters Investments, LLC. He has served as a board member of the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, Patriots' Point Development Authority, the USS Yorktown Foundation and now serves as Chair of the D-Day Society for the National D-Day Memorial Foundation.