

Port of San Diego's  
**GREATEST  
GENERATION**  
COLLECTION

---

*A Commemoration of  
Military Heritage through Art*

---



**TUNA HARBOR PARK**  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

In 1998 Tom Brokaw, the veteran NBC Nightly News anchor, authored a best-selling book titled *The Greatest Generation*. His story told of the generation of Americans who grew up during the Great Depression, went on to fight in World War II and later helped build and shape the post-war America we know today. The spirit of those men and women is commemorated with a collection of U.S. military heritage art in Tuna Harbor Park, on the shore of San Diego Bay.

The Greatest Generation Collection, as well as the other military memorials in the park, honor and celebrate the people, events and military heritage spanning the time from World War II to present day.

Located in the shadow of the decommissioned aircraft carrier USS Midway, the artworks and monuments provide a magnificent setting in which to learn, remember and become inspired.

This collection is the product of generous donations to and partnerships with the Port of San Diego Public Art program. For more than a decade, the Port has recognized that public art provides effective educational and creative support to its role of providing and enhancing community services, recreational opportunities, and public access within the tidelands.

Enjoy the collection and join the Port in saluting the Greatest Generation.

## AIRCRAFT CARRIER MEMORIAL

*T.J. Dixon and James Nelson*



This memorial commemorates U.S. Navy aircraft carriers and all who have served on them. The nine-foot polished black granite obelisk stands as the centerpiece and includes the engraved names of all U.S. carriers. These include the pioneering USS Langley (CV-1) to the new nuclear-powered USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76). The bronze sculptures represent a naval aviator and an enlisted airman.

*The memorial was donated by the Aircraft Carrier Memorial Association.*

## HOMECOMING

*Stanley Bleifield*



This seven-foot bronze sculpture depicts the joyous reunion of a sailor, his wife and child upon his return from a sea deployment with the Navy. It is a scene repeated countless times over the years along the San Diego waterfront and in other Navy homeports. It eloquently attests to a shared sense of accomplishment by sailor, wife and child in that each has done the duty set before them. This sculpture is identical to the artist's original work, which is the focal point at the Quarterdeck, the main entrance to the Naval Heritage Center in Washington, D.C.

*"Homecoming" was funded by the San Diego Padres, the Navy League and the Port of San Diego.*

## BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF MEMORIAL AND ADMIRAL SPRAGUE BUST

*Moon Kim*

This monument honors Vice Admiral Clifton A. F. Sprague and the 13 ships and 7,300 men of Task Unit 77.4.3, known as "Taffy 3." Admiral Sprague commanded Taffy 3 in the Battle off Samar, during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, on October 25, 1944. Five Taffy 3 ships and 895 of their officers and men were lost in this furious, heroic action against overwhelmingly superior enemy forces.



The Battle off Samar was a battle of firsts and lasts: the first and only time that a U.S. aircraft carrier (USS Gambier Bay) was destroyed by enemy gunfire; the first and only time the world's mightiest battleship (Japan's Yamato) fired on an enemy warship; the first time a U.S. warship (USS St. Lo) was sunk by Kamikaze attack; and the last time opposing surface warships engaged each other in battle during World War II.

*The memorial was donated by Task Unit 77.4.3 / Taffy 3, Inc.*



## UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

*J. Seward Johnson*

This 25-foot sculpture captures one of the most iconic and triumphant moments of the Greatest Generation. striking a romantic chord with all who see it, especially the young at heart. It brings to life a famous black and white image of a sailor kissing a young nurse in Times Square, New York City, on August 14, 1945. It's an image that captured the spontaneous eruption of joy and euphoria that swept a war-weary nation when the public announcement was made that after 44 months, World War II was finally over. *"Unconditional Surrender"* is on temporary loan from The Sculpture Foundation, Inc.



## A NATIONAL SALUTE TO BOB HOPE AND THE MILITARY

*Eugene Daub and Steven Whyte*



Bob Hope is known around the world for his legendary entertainment career. Yet it is in the hearts of U.S. servicemen and women that his most enduring legacy lives on. For more than 50 years, he was devoted to entertaining soldiers, sailors and airmen who were deployed overseas. His USO tours, many of which took place at Christmas time, brought a little bit of home and a lot of cheer to thousands of armed services personnel stationed far from home and often close to active combat.

The 16 bronze sculptures comprising the artwork represents one of his typical road shows, often set up in the field, where jeeps and ammunition boxes served as seats and stage. These figures form an eternal audience representing men and women from all branches of military service, covering the time of Bob Hope's first military tour in World War II through his last during the Persian Gulf War in 1990.

The inspiration and planning for the National Salute to Bob Hope and the Military were provided by a Navy veteran's group known as Task Unit 77.4.3/Taffy 3. In recent years, Taffy 3 has devoted its efforts toward building awareness and raising funds to preserve history and honor the veterans of this era.

## A NATIONAL SALUTE TO BOB HOPE AND THE MILITARY



### BOB HOPE

The sculpture of Bob Hope depicts him as he was in the 1940s, wearing Army fatigues and holding a vintage microphone. Symbolically, he is addressing troops from all five branches of the United States military services, from all of the wars for which he entertained.

His pose is a characteristic gesture of delivering a comedic line. The Hope family was an integral part of the discussion over how they wanted to see Bob portrayed, and the sculpture reflects their wishes. Bob is placed in the center of the plaza, oriented so his famous 'slope' nose is in profile for visitors approaching on the sidewalk entrance, and for those viewing from the water.



### WORLD WAR II MARINE CORPS SERGEANT

This sculpture depicts a patient from the 44th Field Hospital, one of the largest fully equipped hospitals in the Philippines during World War II. The Office of the Surgeon General has estimated that close to 15,000 men in the U.S. Army, including Army Air

Forces, underwent amputations during a 4 year period in the mid 40's. The sergeant is depicted in his issue blue robe, freshly pinned with the Purple Heart.



### WORLD WAR II NAVY MACHINIST MATE

This sculpture represents John Ibe, Machinist Mate 3rd Class, who served on and survived the loss of the USS St. Lo (CVE-63), which was sunk in action with 143 of its crewmen on October 25, 1944, during the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Fought

over a four-day period in the sea approaches to the U.S. landing beach on the Philippine island of Leyte, this battle, in terms of the numbers of ships, planes and men involved, and its decisive outcome, is considered the greatest naval battle in history.



### WORLD WAR II PARATROOPER

This sculpture represents a sergeant in the 101st Airborne Division who fought for the liberation of Europe in World War II. During World War II, the Pathfinders of the 101st Airborne led the way on D-Day in their famous pre-dawn drop behind enemy

lines during the invasion of Normandy, June 6, 1944.



### WORLD WAR II ARMY NURSE

More than 59,000 American women served in the Army Nurse Corps during World War II. During the conflict, nurses worked closer to the front lines than they ever had before. The nurse in the sculpture is shown in her regulation uniform. She is sketching a caricature of Bob Hope with a heart.



### WORLD WAR II NAVAL AVIATOR

This Navy lieutenant is emblematic of all Navy and Marine pilots who flew combat missions from the decks of aircraft carriers from forward air bases during World War II. The pilot portrayed in this sculpture is wearing a flight suit with a Mae West

inflatable life vest. The boots shown are non-standard issue, which was sometimes preferred by pilots for being less likely to become waterlogged in the event of a sea landing.



### WORLD WAR II FIGHTER PILOT

The World War II fighter pilot is a captain in the Army Air Force with the 332nd Fighter Group (originally the 99th Fighter Squadron)—known as the "Red Tails"—within the 15th Air Force. This group, composed entirely of African-Americans,

is the only fighter escort group not to lose any bombers to enemy fighters. Known as the Tuskegee Airmen because they were trained at Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama, the pilots of the 332nd shot down 111 German fighter aircraft—including at least two Me-262 jets—and earned 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses for action in the skies over Europe.



### KOREAN WAR MARINE

This sculpture represents an African-American Marine shown in his standard issue cold-weather uniform, a necessity for the harsh Korean winter. Holding a sign that reads "Thanks for the Memories Bob" he demonstrates the enthusiasm and appreciation of U.S. troops for Bob Hope and his efforts with the USO.



## A NATIONAL SALUTE TO BOB HOPE AND THE MILITARY



### KOREAN WAR INFANTRYMAN

The figure of a private from the 45th Infantry Division has been chosen especially to honor Native-American veterans. The 45th was originally formed from citizen soldiers, mostly from the U.S. southwest. The division's insignia was a Thunderbird, an eagle-like symbol from Native-American mythology. Native-Americans are believed to have volunteered for service in Korea in a higher proportion than any other ethnic group.



### KOREAN WAR SAILOR

More than 265,000 U.S. Navy personnel served in the Korean War and played a crucial role in containing Communist aggression. This Korean War era sailor is a Seaman 1st Class shown wearing his dress blue uniform.



### VIETNAM WAR COAST GUARDSMAN

The Coast Guard performed an invaluable role in U.S. military efforts in South Vietnam, being especially adept at operations in the extensive and often poorly charted coastal waters and rivers of the region. This sculpture, representative of the many Hispanic-Americans participating in the war, depicts a Petty Officer 3rd Class serving on a Squadron One patrol boat. On his chest he displays the Purple Heart awarded for wounds received in combat.



### VIETNAM WAR NAVY CORPSMAN

This figure is a Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class, U.S. Navy, from Quang Nam Province in 1968. With the escalation of the Vietnam conflict between 1963 and 1975, hospital corpsmen were called to serve in Southeast Asia including Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand. They performed emergency medical treatment under combat conditions. The corpsman in this sculpture is shown complete with standard-issue drawstring pants and combat boots. He is also shirtless, with dog tags thrown around to his back, in keeping with the more casual nature of USO performances in Vietnam. The corpsman is sitting on top of an ammunition box, which typifies the often make-shift nature of Hope's field stages.



### VIETNAM WAR ARTILLERYMAN

This soldier is a private in an artillery unit in the Vietnam War. He is wearing a T-shirt with no insignia, with his dog tags hanging from his neck while holding a home-made sign that reads "Go Bob!" U.S. artillery units in Vietnam were organized under I Field Force, II Field Force and XXIV Corps Artillery, consisting of 44 battalions in total. These battalions played a significant role in supporting American and allied infantry operations in Vietnam.



### VIETNAM WAR AIR FORCE MECHANIC

The mechanic seated on a wooden ammunition box is a Hispanic technical sergeant in the U.S. Air Force from the Vietnam War. The first Air Force mechanics in Vietnam were sent in support of the French for seven months in 1954. Their deployment then eventually grew to nearly 500 men, and their base at Do Son was under frequent enemy attack.



### GULF WAR SOLDIER IN OPERATION DESERT STORM

Forty thousand women were deployed in Operation Desert Storm during the First Gulf War (1990-91), which was fought to liberate the Persian Gulf nation of Kuwait. This Gulf War soldier is an African-American 2nd Lieutenant in the 82nd Airborne who has been wounded in combat. She has a notebook on her lap in anticipation of receiving an autograph from Bob Hope. This sculpture, which shows the soldier with her leg in a cast, serves to honor all wounded veterans.



### GULF WAR AIR FORCE STAFF SERGEANT

The sculpture features a 22-year-old Asian-American female staff sergeant from the Communications Squad stationed in Kuwait City in 1990. Sixteen percent of veterans from Desert Storm are women, and by 1993 over 50,000 Asian-Americans were in uniform. The figure is shown wearing a standard-issue Battle Dress Uniform (BDU) and desert combat boots.

## THE USS SAN DIEGO (CL-53) MEMORIAL

*Eugene Daub and Louis Quaintance*

This artwork commemorates the distinguished service of the cruiser USS San Diego (CL-53) and her crew during World War II. The floor of the monument features a large, colored terrazzo map of the western Pacific where the ship operated and fought during World War II. Superimposed on this map is a representation in brass strips of the ship's steaming track from this period. Locations and names of battles and engagements are marked with brass stars. A life-size bronze sculpture of a sailor represents all the crewmembers that served on the USS San Diego, and a large bas-relief on the south wall depicts the ship in battle at sea. *The memorial was donated by the USS San Diego (CL53) Memorial Association.*



## USS MIDWAY MUSEUM

The USS Midway was the first aircraft carrier to be commissioned after the end of World War II. She was active in the Vietnam War as well as Operation Desert Storm. Over 47 years, Midway became the longest-serving U.S. Navy carrier of the 20th century. Today USS Midway is the nation's most-visited naval ship museum and is open daily for both guided and self-guided tours.



## PEARL HARBOR SURVIVORS PLAQUE

This plaque was placed in 1984 by Carnation Chapter Three, a local chapter of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association. It was installed by the members to honor the memory of their ship mates, many of whom departed from San Diego during World War II.

## TUNA FLEET SERVICE WORLD WAR II

During World War II the U.S. Navy, Army and Coast Guard recruited the assistance of a different kind ... fishing vessels. A storyboard placed within Tuna Harbor Park overlooks and chronicles the more than 50 tuna clippers that were called into service from San Diego. "Yippes" as the boats were known, were naturally equipped with advanced refrigeration systems, making them perfect to transfer food and other supplies throughout the Pacific.



1. Aircraft Carrier Memorial
  2. Homecoming
  3. Battle of Leyte Gulf Memorial and Admiral Sprague Bust
  4. Unconditional Surrender
  5. A National Salute to Bob Hope and the Military
  6. The USS San Diego (CL-53) Memorial
- A. USS Midway Museum
  - B. Pearl Harbor Survivors Plaque
  - C. Tuna Fleet Service Information Sign