



STAMP ALERT

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USS Arizona Memorial Commemorated on Stamp

A high-resolution image of the stamp is available for media use only by emailing mark.r.saunders@usps.gov.

HONOLULU — The U.S. Postal Service today honored the tranquil shrine that pays tribute to the 1,177 sailors aboard the USS Arizona who lost their lives Dec. 7, 1941, with the dedication of a Priority Mail Express \$19.99 stamp.

“Today, nearly 100 years to the day that the Navy laid the keel to begin construction of the Arizona, we gather to pay tribute to its final resting spot,” said U.S. Postal Service Information Technology Vice President John Edgar in dedicating the stamp. “Not everyone will have an opportunity to visit Hawaii and see this memorial in person. But with this stamp, they’ll be able to see what it looks like and be reminded of what it stands for. “

The stamp artwork features an illustration of the white concrete memorial on the Hawaiian island of Oahu rising above the sunken ship in the shape of a bridge. Depicted under a sunny sky and bright clouds with an American flag fluttering overhead, the memorial is mirrored by its own reflection on the water below. Designed by art director Phil Jordan of Falls Church, VA, the stamp showcases the work of illustrator [Dan Cosgrove](#) of Chicago, IL.

The USS Arizona Memorial Priority Mail Express stamp is available in sheets of 10 and also may

be purchased individually. Customers may purchase the stamps at usps.com/stamps, at 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), at Post Offices nationwide or at ebay.com/stamps.

“Let this stamp serve as a small reminder of the sacrifices made by the brave sailors who gave their lives here,” added Edgar. “Let this stamp achieve the same goal as the memorial it depicts — to always remember the Arizona.”

Scheduled to join Edgar in dedicating the stamp were U.S. Sen. (ret.) Daniel K. Akaka; U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Richard Williams, USN; Hawaii State Rep. K. Mark Takai; World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument Superintendent Paul DePrey; and U.S. Postal Service Honolulu District Manager Greg Wolny.

“The USS Arizona Memorial stamp will help Americans remember the toll of war, the sacrifice of our service members and the end of conflict,” said DePrey. “The memorial is an iconic structure symbolizing both loss and contemplation. By dedicating this stamp, we are continuing to bear witness to history.”

Dec. 7, 1941: ‘A Date Which Will Live in Infamy’

Nearly half the Americans killed aboard the Arizona died when a bomb striking an ammunition store caused it to detonate. The Arizona’s remains and those entombed in her now rest in Pearl Harbor. The Arizona memorial rises above the ship itself, surrounded by the rainbow-streaked oil that continues to leak from the ship’s hull. Ultimately, the memorial marks not only the end of more than a thousand lives, but the entry of the United States into World War II.

According to Daniel A. Martinez, chief historian at [World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument at Pearl Harbor](https://www.worldwar2monument.com/), tensions between the two nations were running high when, at 6 a.m. Sun., Dec. 7, six Japanese aircraft carriers launched the first wave of 183 planes. A total of 350 planes were used in the surprise attack on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. Among their targets was the USS Arizona, a battleship anchored in Pearl Harbor. The ship was built at the New York Navy Yard in Brooklyn and commissioned in October 1916.

The Attack

At 7 a.m., two radar operators spotted a wave of incoming planes but were told not to worry about it. The officer on duty at the information center at Fort Shafter believed they were American planes scheduled to arrive at Hickam Field on Oahu. An hour later, as sailors on the Arizona prepared to raise the flag, a Japanese fighter flew low overhead and strafed the ship with gunfire. The attack had begun. As dive bombers, torpedo bombers, and fighters filled the sky, an armor-piercing bomb penetrated the Arizona’s deck and detonated inside an ammunition storage area, causing hundreds of thousands of pounds of explosives to ignite at once. The ship collapsed on itself and began to sink. Of the nearly 1,500 men assigned to the Arizona, fewer than 350 survived — and only because some of the sailors were on shore at the time.

The Arizona was still burning when President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed Congress the following day and asked for a declaration of war, saying, “Yesterday, December 7, 1941 — a date that will live in infamy — the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.” The nation’s shock and grief were transformed into a commitment to fight the war.

The First Memorial

After World War II ended, the idea of creating a memorial to the Arizona gradually gained momentum. The first permanent memorial at Pearl Harbor was dedicated Dec. 7, 1955. A 10-foot high basalt stone placed on Ford Island by the Navy Club, it was erected near the submerged wreckage of the Arizona and honored all American servicemen killed Dec. 7, 1941. But some people, particularly in the Navy, wanted more. In a letter sent to the Secretary of the Navy, Charles Thomas pointed out, “Whether or not the Navy has done its best to preserve the dignity of the USS Arizona’s remains, it is still blamed because this burial place for 1,102 men is a rusted

mass of junk...an appropriate memorial should be constructed to honor the many valiant men who went down with her and now lie entombed within her hull.”

Fund Raising to Create Today’s Memorial

Over the next three years, private individuals and the military pushed for a memorial. Organizers launched a national campaign to raise \$500,000. In 1958, the Ralph Edwards program “This is Your Life” featured the Arizona’s senior surviving officer, Rear Admiral Samuel Fuqua on national television. At the end of the program, Edwards asked viewers to send in contributions and eventually raised \$95,000.

Elvis Contributes to the Fund Raising

By 1961, the fund-raising campaign was beginning to lose steam. An unconventional rock-and-roll icon stepped in to help by giving a benefit concert at Pearl Harbor March 25, 1961. The star wore his famous gold lamé jacket and performed to the screams and cries of several thousand fans. Elvis Presley raised more than \$50,000. Later that year, Congress and the state of Hawaii appropriated the funds needed to finish building the memorial.

The Memorial’s Design

The design and construction of the USS Arizona Memorial were well under way before the fundraising was completed. The Navy’s original specifications called for a bridge-like structure that spanned the sunken battleship, and architect Alfred Preis was chosen to create the design.

According to Preis, the building’s concave shape, which dips in the middle, symbolized the nation’s initial defeat at Pearl Harbor and ultimate return to peace. Preis designed an open-assembly deck to create a serene and non-coercive atmosphere for contemplation. A separate room was set aside to enshrine the names of the *Arizona*’s dead. There, visitors may witness and reflect upon a giant wall of marble bearing the names of the 1,177 men who died aboard the Arizona. The shrine room also contains the open windows that Preis designed depicting the Tree of Life, which has come to be known as a symbol of peace and harmony.

The USS Arizona Memorial was dedicated Memorial Day, 1962. In 1980, the National Park Service took over memorial operations. A presidential proclamation in 2008 declared the site part of the new World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. A new visitor center was built in 2010 to provide a museum, theater facilities and visitor services. More than 1.5 million people visit the memorial annually.

Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at local Post Offices, at usps.com/stamps or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

USS Arizona Memorial Cancellations
Marketing Department
3600 Aolele Street
Honolulu, HI 96820-9661

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, there is a 5-cent charge per postmark. All orders must be postmarked by May 13, 2014.

Ordering First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-

782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service
Catalog Request
PO Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

There are three philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

117116, First-Day Cover, \$20.43.

117121, Digital Color Postmark, \$21.14.

117131, Stamp Deck Card, \$0.95.

Customers may view the USS Arizona Memorial Priority Mail Express stamp, as well as many of this year's other stamps, on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps, on Twitter [@USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or on the website uspsstamps.com, the Postal Service's online site for information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

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