



# NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE™

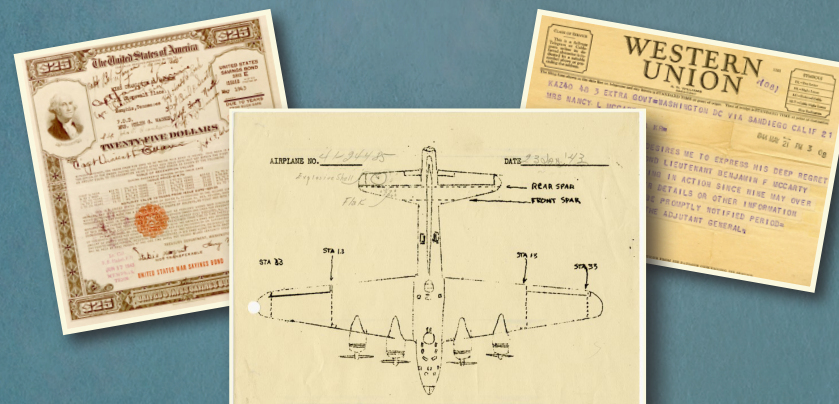


## Memphis Belle™ Exhibit Opening & Events May 17-19, 2018



### The Exhibit

The exhibit area immediately around the *Memphis Belle* will showcase the fascinating story of the aircraft and its crew, and it will include artifacts from several Airmen who served on the Memphis Belle in combat. Surrounding the Memphis Belle display will be a major exhibit entitled “Crippling the Nazi War Machine: USAAF Strategic Bombing in Europe,” which tells the incredible account of the bomber crews who, through great sacrifice, played a key role in defeating Nazi Germany. These stories will be told through compelling images, and numerous personal artifacts never seen before by visitors.



## EXHIBIT OPENING & EVENTS May 17-19, 2018

For more information visit [www.nationalmuseum.af.mil](http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil)  
1100 Spatz Street | Dayton, Ohio | 937-255-3286





This national aviation treasure and widely recognized symbol of American bravery and heroism during WWII will be placed on permanent public display exactly 75 years after its crew finished their last mission in the war against Nazi Germany on May 17, 1943.



The B-17F *Memphis Belle*™ was the first U.S. Army Air Forces heavy bomber to return to the United States after completing 25 missions over Europe. The *Memphis Belle* will be placed on permanent public display at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force on May 17, 2018.

# The History

The pilot of the *Memphis Belle*, then Lt. Robert Morgan, named the aircraft after his wartime girlfriend, Margaret Polk of Memphis, Tenn. Morgan chose the now famous artwork from a 1941 George Petty illustration in Esquire magazine.

The *Memphis Belle* and its crew of ten flew their first combat mission in Nov. 1942. Faced with hordes of enemy aircraft and deadly anti-aircraft fire, the odds of a bomber crew finishing a required 25 missions was unlikely, but the crew of the *Memphis Belle* beat the odds with their 25th combat mission on May 17, 1943.

After returning to the U.S. in June that year, its crew flew the aircraft across the country to more than 30 stops on a war bond and morale boosting tour. With the bond tour and the 1944 William Wyler documentary, “The Memphis Belle,” the aircraft and its crew became widely known and celebrated. In 1990 a major motion picture of the same name added to their fame.

The aircraft, which had been on loan from the Air Force to the City of Memphis, was relocated to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in 2005 under the terms of an agreement with the Memphis Belle Memorial Association.



# Three-day Celebratory Event

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018

- 7 a.m. Museum gate opens
- 8 a.m.-9 a.m.\* WWII aircraft land on runway behind the museum
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Museum open

## THURSDAY, MAY 17, 2018

- 8 a.m. Museum gate opens
- 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Museum open
- 9:15-9:30 a.m.\* *Memphis Belle* Exhibit ribbon cutting
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. WWII aircraft on static display
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. WWII reenactors and vehicles
- 6:30 p.m. Living History Film Series event (\$) in the Air Force Museum Theatre

## FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2018

- 8 a.m. Museum gate opens
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Museum open
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. WWII aircraft on static display
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. WWII reenactors and vehicles
- 4:30 p.m.\* WWII aircraft take-off
- 6 p.m. Big Band Concert

## SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2018

- 8 a.m. Museum gate opens
- 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Museum open
- Throughout the day WWII aircraft flyovers
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. WWII reenactors and vehicles
- 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Armed Forces Day Plane Talks
- 4:30 p.m. Living History Film Series event (\$) in the Air Force Museum Theatre

Additional activities will include educational programs, book signings, food trucks and more.

*Schedule is subject to change. Outdoor activities are weather dependent.*

*\*Time is approximate.*

For more information visit our website at [www.nationalmuseum.af.mil](http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil)

