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Hollywood Legends Rally to Support National Spirit of '45 Day

Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive! Honors Greatest Generation

HOLLYWOOD, August 10, 2010 – Hollywood legends such as Ernie Borgnine, Tony Curtis, Carol Channing, Rhonda Fleming, and Margaret O'Brien are rallying in support of *Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!* a grassroots campaign to honor the members of the Greatest Generation.

“I want to send my enthusiastic best wishes to everyone involved with Spirit of '45 Day,” said Academy Award winning actor Ernest Borgnine who served in the US Navy from 1935 to 1945. “ I was proud to have worked with Edith Shain who was on the receiving end of the ‘kiss seen ‘round the world’ at the end of World War II. She was a wonderful lady and worked tirelessly to make sure America remembers the men and women who fought for America in WWII. Thanks for keeping her dream of a national day of remembrance for our generation alive.”

Hollywood legend Tony Curtis also served in the Navy during WWII and was in Tokyo Bay when the peace treaty between Japan and the U.S. was signed on the USS Missouri on September 2, 1945.

“I was just an angry little street hoodlum from the Bronx named Bernie Schwartz, who hated his life” said Curtis, who enlisted after the attack on Pearl Harbor and studied acting on the G.I. Bill after the war. “The Navy became my mother and America became my dad.”

Curtis joined Ms. Shain in New York City in for a press conference held in Times Square on August 14, 2009, to announce the Spirit of '45 Day campaign. Mr. Curtis also represented Spirit of '45 in the 2009 New York Veterans Day Parade.



Edith Shain and Ernie Borgnine share a memory before representing Spirit of '45 Day in the 2009 National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C.



Tony Curtis with poster from 2009 Times Square press conference signed by fans. Curtis is especially proud of his WWII service.



Hollywood stars Rhonda Fleming, Carol Channing, and Margaret O'Brien and TV star Kate Linder and WWII re-enactors join 100 year old Army veteran Bea Cohen during at Spirit of '45 event held in Los Angeles on August 14, 2010.

Other celebrities are supporting the efforts of ***Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!*** which has persuaded the U.S. Congress to enact a concurrent resolution calling for creation of a permanent ***Spirit of '45*** day on the second Sunday of August.

“Having had the tremendous opportunity during World War II of touring, entertaining and visiting with our troops in the United States and abroad who served our great country, it gives me immense pleasure and heartfelt gratitude to know that on the 65th Anniversary of the end of the war they will be forever remembered for their sacrifice and commitment to America and to the American people with a national day of remembrance,” said Rhonda Fleming, whose husband Darol Carlson served in the Navy during WWII. “I’m honored to pay tribute to their legacy and I salute the men and women who have served and continue to serve our great country in keeping the Spirit of ‘45 alive. May God bless our United States of America!”

Ms. Fleming will entertain the troops one more time as she visits World War II veterans at the California Veterans Home in Los Angeles on Saturday, August 14, the 65th anniversary of the day the war ended and the peace began. This will be one of hundreds of events around the country Saturday, starting in Times Square where hundreds of people will reenact the historic kiss between an unknown sailor and nurse Edith Shain who was active with ***Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!*** before her death in June.

“My dear husband, Harry, and many others like him went to war so that their children could have liberty to study math, philosophy, geography, science, architecture, commerce and agriculture in order that future generations could have the freedom to study painting, poetry, dance, and music that could then enhance the knowledge their fathers had previously gained,” said Carol Channing. “Armed with these tools, they can reach beyond even their grand fathers’ dreams for them. The veterans of WWII achieved the goal of protecting these rights for today’s and future generations and should always be remembered for doing so.”

Margaret O’Brien, famous for her film roles in the ‘40s, including playing opposite Judy Garland in the movie “Meet Me In St. Louis,” produced a public service announcement that was shown during Major League Baseball games on Spirit of ‘45 Day.

“For countless reasons, all of America shall forever be indebted to the services provided by our armed forces and those on the home front during the most turbulent time in history,” said Margaret O’Brien, who sold more war bonds than any other star working at MGM during the war years, and was part of the famous Hollywood Canteen. “In memory of their gallant efforts that forever changed our world and our nation, I am working to help with the efforts of securing a national day of remembrance. I wish all of you who served in the Spirit of ‘45 all of God’s blessings. Much love to all of you always!”

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