

MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY

JULY 27TH, 2010 | 2:00 PM TO 4:00 PM | COLONIA, YAP



ENS.
HOWARD A. HOLDING



ENS. JOSEPH EDWARD COX
MEMORIAL



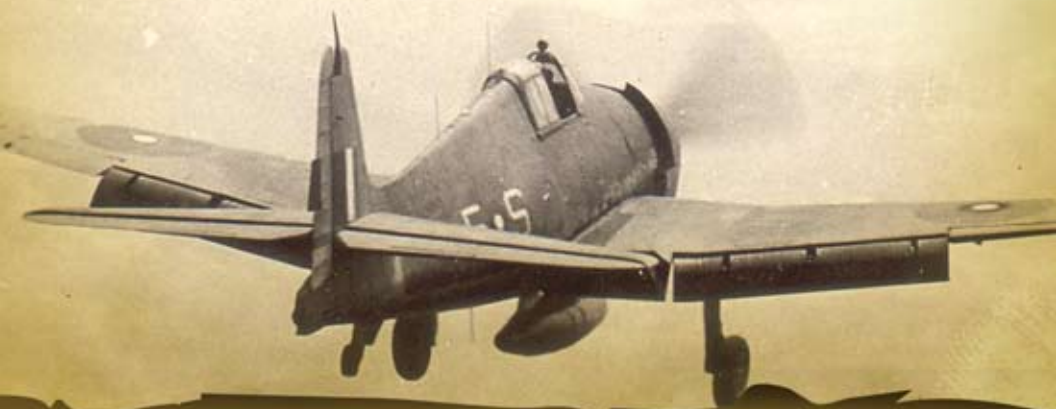
LT. HARRY D. BROWN

Remember the Fallen

Ens. Joseph Edward Cox

F6F-5 Hellcat - VF-20 "Fighting Twenty"

USS Enterprise



September 6, 1944

In the early afternoon of September 6, 1944 Ens. Joseph Cox and thirty-four fellow US fighter pilots ascended from the flight decks of the carriers USS Enterprise, USS Franklin and USS San Jacinto to conduct a fighter sweep of the already battered island of Yap. The island had been hit hard over the previous months by high-flying long-range B-24 bombers of the US Army Air Force. They circled around to attack from the southwest out of the sun. On the first pass of what was thought to be a routine neutralization strike (milk run), the situation quickly proved more serious. A Hellcat flown by Lt. Harry Brown was hit by anti-aircraft fire, and began streaming black smoke before crashing into a hillside near the village of Talguw. Before long, Joseph's Hellcat was also hit. He lost control, colliding mid-air with Ens. Howard Holding. Both planes quickly became caught in a tight, nose-down spiral from which neither recovered. Howard's plane crashed into the harbor while Joseph's plane fell near the present day memorial. Following the war, Joseph's remains were recovered near his plane and returned to Idaho for burial in a private cemetery. By the end of the war, wreckages and remains for both Lt. Harry Brown and Ens. Howard Holding had not yet been found. They were presumed missing and eventually declared dead in February, 1946. Sixty years later in September of 2006, their planes were finally discovered.

The Memorial Site

The Ens. Joseph E. Cox Hellcat is one of 36 American planes shot down over Yap during World War II. The plane went down with three other Hellcat's from the USS Enterprise on September 6, 1944. Despite the violent crash and years of neglect, Joseph's plane remains relatively intact today. It is one of the most unique WWII wrecks, and now memorials, in the Pacific. Rescued from its original crash site at the modern-day Yap landfill, the plane was moved one-half mile in September 2008 to the Yap Public Works property, where it is now on display. A joint partnership between the Yap Visitor's Bureau, Yap Public Works Department and the Missing Air-Crew Project created the memorial to honor Ens. Joseph E. Cox and all the men who lost their lives near Yap during WWII, where over 36 American planes were shot down and 110 American men remain listed as missing in action. Although the memorial displays Ens. Cox's aircraft, it is intended to be a symbolic memorial for all of the men lost near Yap during WWII.

Yap Island during WWII

Yap was considered a backwater to the overall Pacific war. Most are surprised to find out that the US attacked Yap Island almost daily from June 1944 to August 1945, losing over 35 planes and hundreds of men. Yap was strategically located between the Philippines and Guam, a crossroads for many of the Pacific battles. Once the US decided not to invade Yap in September 1944 they needed to insure that it was isolated from the Japanese supply chains and that it could not be used as an offensive forward operating base. This was especially important once the US occupied the nearby deep-water harbor of Ulithi in the fall of 1944. Keeping Yap out of the war was a key factor for US success in the rest of the Pacific theatre. Attacks were launched against Yap through long-range B-24 bomber raids, carrier raids, ship-to-shore bombardments, and land-based Navy and Marine planes and submarines. Pat Ranfranz and the Missing Air Crew Project have spent over 20 years researching the history of Yap during WWII, sharing not only the military history of the actual missions but also the personal stories of many of the men, preserving their memories for generations to come.



Opening Comments

Larry Raigetel

Director, Dept. of Youth and Civic Affairs

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Invocation

Father Moses Tashibelit

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*Presentation of Colors
National Anthems*

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Explanation of Dedication Ceremony

Pat Ranfranz, Missing Air Crew Project

Mark Noah, History Flight

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Yap Governor's Comments

Hon. Sebastian L. Anefal

Governor, Yap State

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Ambassador Comments

Peter A. Prahar, U.S. Ambassador

Federated States of Micronesia

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Prayer of Blessing and Dedication

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*Moment of Silence and
Rendering of Honors*

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Closing Comments

Larry Raigetel

Director, Dept. of Youth and Civic Affairs

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Farewell Dance

Ngariy Village

The Memorial Dedication Ceremony

The dedication of a memorial holds a long and honored place among warriors and the families who send forth their young people for service to our nation. The memorial links the selfless service of the soldier, the sacrifice of the family, and the honor of the military unit. The honor and glory afforded the warrior for his supreme sacrifice in offering his life for his country is the last full measure of devotion on behalf of a country and its ideals, and in doing so we honor the family in this sacrifice. We have chosen this location and memorial to honor the fallen and to show sincere appreciation and deep respect for that sacrifice. This place will now become a place of reflection, a place to heal, a place to remember, and a place to gather and to honor, hence this day forth!

Soldier's Prayer

Lord, I pray this day for Courage, Courage to face and conquer my own fears...Courage to proudly hold the standard of my country in the face of all her enemies. I pray for Strength, Strength to perform my sacred duty with honor and dedication... Strength for my family and loved ones if I am called into 'harms way.' But most of all Lord, I pray for the protection of your Armor that I may stand wearing your Breastplate of Righteousness, buckle the Belt of Truth around my waist and carry your Shield of Faith. INTO YOUR LOVING ARMS I PLACE MY LIFE THAT YOUR will be done.

Special Thanks to:

*Yap Visitor's Bureau
Yap Department of Public Works
Missing Air-Crew Project
History Flight Organization*

The Ens. Joseph E. Cox memorial dedication committee extends its appreciation to all donors and participants that supported the memorial cause. Thank you for your generous contributions.

A Special thanks to the following individuals. Without their personal efforts this day could not have been realized.

*Tom Tamangmow
Don Evans
Patrick & Cherie Ranfranz
Mark Noah*