

# ERNEST BORGNINE

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

We are honored to have as our keynote speaker for the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, Mr. Ernest Borgnine, World War II veteran and Academy Award winning actor.

Ernest Borgnine was born Ernes Effron Borgnine on January 24, 1917 in Hamden, Connecticut. His parents, Charles and Anna Borgnine, emigrated from Carpi, a small town in Northern Italy, at the turn of the century.

In 1935, following his graduation from high school, Borgnine was uncertain about his future and he entered the Navy. While in the service of his country he rose through the ranks and achieved the rate of Chief Gunners Mate. For most of his ten-year career in the Navy he served on destroyers. His love for the Navy never left him and is a subject that he enjoys reminiscing about. He still maintains contact with his old shipmates from destroyer days. After leaving the Navy, he enrolled in drama school. His big break came in 1949 when he made his acting debut on Broadway in the play *Harvey*.

Borgnine moved to Hollywood in 1951 to pursue movie stardom. His film career gained momentum in 1953 when he won the role of Sergeant "Fatso" Judson in *From Here to Eternity*. That memorable role led to numerous supporting roles as heavies in a steady string of dramas and westerns.

Borgnine was able to avoid type casting in 1955 as a sensitive and love-struck butcher in *Marty*, for which he won the Academy Award for Best Actor. In the 1950's and early 1960's, Borgnine gave memorable



performances in films such as *The Vikings*, *Barrabas*, *The Dirty Dozen*, *The Wild Bunch*, *The Poseidon Adventure*, and *Emperor of the North*.

Beginning in 1962 and ending in 1966, Borgnine played the leading role in the popular television series "McHale's Navy".

Ernest Borgnine has always said that his greatest love is acting and he continues to work today. His amazing prolific career includes appearances in over 100 feature films, and three television series.

Borgnine is married to Tova Borgnine who heads her own cosmetics company. They make their home in Beverly Hills, California.

When not in front of the camera, Borgnine is active in numerous charities, and tirelessly speaks at benefits throughout the country. In 1986 he was the honorary guest and speaker for the Pearl Harbor Survivors national convention. He has earned several honorary doctorates from colleges across the United States as well as numerous Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Today we are privileged to have a dynamic personality and patriot as our keynote speaker, Mr. Ernest Borgnine.

By Daniel Martinez, Historian  
USS Arizona Memorial



Best Actor 1955

*Marty*

## PROGRAM OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 7, 2003

### Hawaiian Blessing

Reverend Kahu Kamake Kanahele  
and Kahu Kauila Clark

### Welcome

Douglas Lentz, Superintendent  
USS Arizona Memorial

### Invocation

Chaplain J. P. Hedges, U.S.N.

### Moment of Silence

USS O'Kane Passing in Review

### Missing Man Flyover

Hawai'i Air National Guard

### Presentation of Colors

Joint Service Color Guard

### Prayer for Peace

Japan Religious Committee for World Freedom

### A Survivor Remembers

Robert Kinzler, President, Aloha Chapter  
Pearl Harbor Survivors Association

### Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Daniel Martinez, Historian  
USS Arizona Memorial

### Keynote Speaker

Ernest Borgnine  
World War II Veteran & Academy Award Recipient

### Wreath Presentation

Pearl Harbor Survivors / National Park Service Rangers

### Rifle Salute

Naval Station Pearl Harbor Ceremonial Guard

### Taps

U.S. Army 25th Infantry Division Tropic Lightning Band

### Benediction

Chaplain J. P. Hedges, U.S.N.

### Closing Remarks

Douglas Lentz, Superintendent  
USS Arizona Memorial

### Postlude

Battle Hymn of the Republic

### Floral Offering

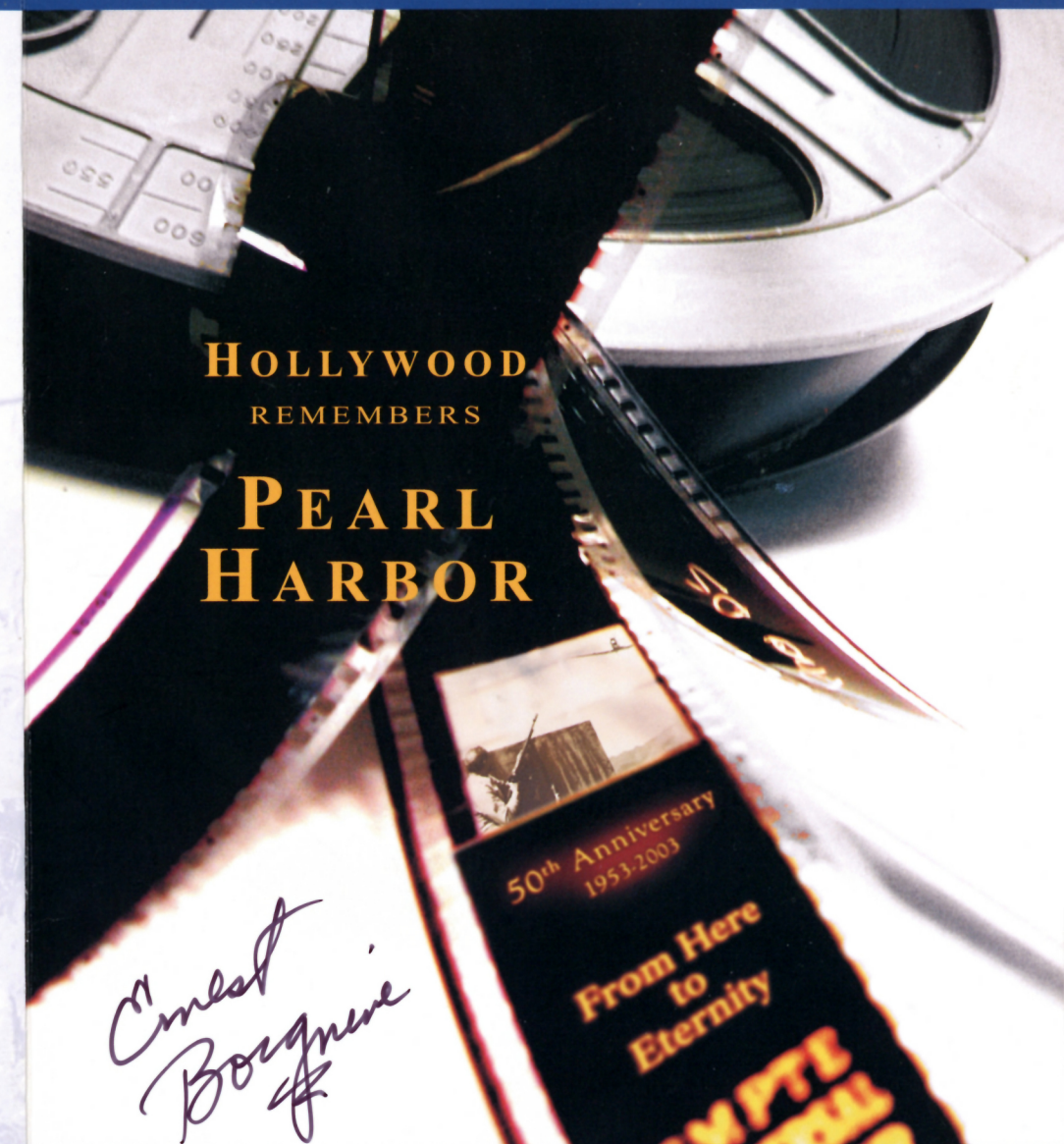
Guests may take a flower and a Pearl Harbor Casualty Inscription to the USS Arizona Memorial. The flower may be dropped into the water to honor the dead.



National Park Service  
Department of the Interior

## 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration

December 7, 2003



USS Arizona Memorial

# HOLLYWOOD REMEMBERS PEARL HARBOR 1942-2001

By Daniel Martinez, Historian  
USS Arizona Memorial

In the last 60 years Hollywood has created eight films of the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1942, the smoke had barely faded from the skies over Oahu when production of a major documentary film was initiated.

The first major film to tackle the celluloid war effort was undertaken by the newly established Field Photographic Unit headed by the noted Hollywood director John Ford. His mission was to create films that engendered patriotism and support of the American war effort. Underneath him were a number of celebrated film directors. One of note was Gregg Toland. This gifted cinematographer gave us the masterful images of Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*. In 1942, Toland was sent to Oahu to create a documentary film of the attack on Pearl Harbor. His creative genius would be his undoing. His 84-minute film, *December 7th*, was completed in 1942 and premiered in Washington, D.C. If one could go back in time, how interesting it would be to witness the reaction of a startled and stunned audience, whispering phrases of disgust and disbelief. Mr. Toland had indicted Washington and the military for its ineptitude and lack of preparedness. Japanese-Americans were singled out as a race of mixed loyalties and agents of the treacherous Japanese government. That night the film was confiscated and held in custody by the US Government. It was suppressed for nearly a year. John Ford re-edited Toland's



Photo: Andrew Cooper, SMPSP

*Pearl Harbor*, 2001

film and presented a more acceptable 30-minute version. In a stunning reversal of fortune, *December 7th* received an Academy Award in 1943. In reflection, this film became the first celluloid casualty in the cinematic retelling of Pearl Harbor.

The first feature film to tackle the Pearl Harbor story was *Air Force*. The story was a simple one based loosely on elements of historical fact. In the film, a B-17 bomber called the "Mary Ann" flies right into the attack on Pearl Harbor. References are made towards disloyal Japanese who fired on this plane and knocked off the tails of aircraft parked on the Hickam airstrip. Added to this mix of false allegations was a mascot named "Tojo", a dog that barked when references to Japanese were made. The "Mary Ann" left Oahu and continued its flight across the Pacific. The film dramatically ends with the "Mary Ann" and its crew participating in the Battle of Midway. This film would find favor with the Academy and receive an Oscar for film editing. *Air Force* was the start of Hollywood's

interest in retelling the Pearl Harbor attack and it would not be the last. Six more epics would follow.

In 1953, director Fred Zinnemann would finish a film that has become legendary in telling the Army experience at Pearl Harbor. *From Here to Eternity* was based on the book written by James Jones who served as a soldier at Schofield Barracks during the attack. The film was far from a glamorous recreation so popular during the war years. It was a gritty tale of murder, adultery, cowardice, sadism, courage, love, honor, and above all, duty. Mixed into all of these elements was a cast that was cohesive in its portrayal of complex characters. Among the actors in this Academy Award winning ensemble were Ernest Borgnine, Frank Sinatra, Burt Lancaster, Montgomery Clift, Deborah Kerr, and Donna Reed. A majority of the filming took place in Hawaii at the actual locations depicted in Jones' novel. The film received eight Academy Awards including Best Picture.

Eight years later, Japanese filmmakers ventured into the murky waters of telling their side of the Pearl Harbor attack in a Toho Company release of *I Bombed Pearl Harbor*. One can only imagine the American reaction, just twenty years after the Pearl Harbor attack, our former enemy was making a commercial film about their participation. The film is a curious and yet important vehicle in trying to see the attack from a different perspective. It stresses Japanese honor to country and commitment to duty. In a sense it

stresses with unbridled pride that Japan was initially correct in its audacious attack. The story is told through the eyes of a Japanese aviator. He soon realizes that the war was not a noble venture but rather a terrible waste. It is vividly portrayed at the conclusion of the film, where the once victorious Japanese fleet is destroyed at the Battle of Midway. The film closes with a reflective monologue and sorrowful music that is almost recognized as a cinematic apology for the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1965, Paramount Pictures came back to Hawaii to film Otto Preminger's *In Harm's Way*. He brought with him a sterling cast headed by John Wayne. Strangely, Preminger decided to film Hawaii in black and white. The film begins on the eve of the attack with a raucous poolside party attended by Naval officers and their wives. While they celebrate in Pearl Harbor, Admiral Rock Torrey (John Wayne) is at sea with a cluster of cruisers and destroyers. The next morning the attack unfolds and Captain Torrey rushes to relieve a besieged fleet. The Pearl Harbor attack is dramatically recreated and was in fact filmed in Pearl Harbor. Unfortunately the final battle scene is marred by the clumsy use of miniatures. Preminger's version of Pearl Harbor remains to many a curious mystery.

Perhaps the greatest and most accurate depiction of the attack on Pearl Harbor was the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox classic *Tora! Tora! Tora!* Released in 1970, this big screen feature was a documentary style film that explored the intricate details of intelligence

and diplomacy prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. It also made us aware of the code breaking that was taking place in 1941. Filming of this epic began in 1968 in Hawaii. What is so memorable about the film is its dramatic battle sequences. From the attacks on the airfields to the ships at Pearl Harbor, the visual images rendered by director Richard Fleischer were simply awesome. However, *Tora! Tora! Tora!* is not without flaws. Several of the American scenes have historical inaccuracies. It is interesting to note that *Tora! Tora! Tora!* is a product of Japanese and American co-production. Primarily, the Japanese filmed all sequences pertaining to their side and the American counterparts did the same. It was a first in cinematic history.

*The Final Countdown* was a United Artists venture into Pearl Harbor science fiction. The carrier USS *Nimitz* encounters an unusual storm in Hawaiian waters, transporting the ship and crew back to the eve of December 7, 1941. The crew realizes that they can now change history and prevent the attack. Kirk Douglas plays the captain and Martin Sheen the awestruck civilian observer. The captain decides that his duty is to protect the US in both the past, present and future and orders a strike on the Japanese fleet. The storm mysteriously reappears and the *Nimitz* returns to the present. The film was met with mixed reviews and still remains a tantalizing flirtation with reality and fiction.

In 2001, Walt Disney Productions entered the cinematic arena of the attack on Pearl

Harbor. This much-anticipated multi-million-dollar production started off to be an accurate depiction of the attack. Pearl Harbor Survivors were consulted along with noted historians. However, *Pearl Harbor* simply became a love story with the historical facts loosely interpreted. Its main elements were young romance, a love triangle and disaster. Hollywood has used this formula relentlessly. But *Pearl Harbor* is not without some originality. The breathtaking aerial sequences are perhaps the best that Hollywood has produced. If there is an epitaph for this film, it is that young people had a rekindled interest in the events of December 7, 1941. It helped the young viewer understand that the Pearl Harbor attack was a defining moment in American and World history.

Hollywood will never grow tired of this story. The attack on Pearl Harbor is an icon of history. It will always be of interest to the filmmaker because of its dynamic appeal. With today's technology and filmmaking techniques, recreating the attack and events surrounding Pearl Harbor accurately is more of a challenge to the screenwriter than the technician. Perhaps there will be a film in the future that will portray the events accurately, for history after all is the story of people. A film shines brightest when events and people are explored with historical honesty and sensitivity. Those we honor today would appreciate that portrayal.



*Air Force*  
1942



*From Here to Eternity*  
1953



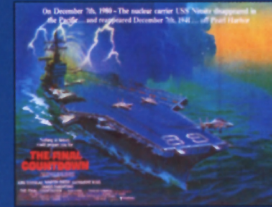
*I Bombed Pearl Harbor*  
1961



*In Harm's Way*  
1965



*Tora! Tora! Tora!*  
1970



*The Final Countdown*  
1980