

Cantigny Events to Highlight Medal of Honor Month

WHEATON, IL, August 24, 2009 — Cantigny Park, part of the McCormick Foundation, will host several special events in September in recognition of all Congressional Medal of Honor recipients.

Most notably, more than 50 of the 95 living Medal of Honor recipients will visit the Cantigny estate on Saturday, Sept. 19, in association with the 2009 Commit to Courage Medal of Honor Convention in Chicago.

The Medal of Honor is the nation's highest military award presented for valor in combat. Of the estimated 42 million Americans who have served our country in uniform, only 3,447 individuals have received this ultimate distinction.

"The Medal of Honor recognizes valor *above and beyond the call of duty*," said First Division Museum Director Paul Herbert. "This group of exceptional veterans inspires us to fulfill our own duties, to our country, communities and families."

At 1:30 pm, on Sept. 19, the public is invited to observe a ceremony by the Medal of Honor recipients in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The ceremony will take place at the "doughboy" statue in front of the Visitors Center.

The U.S. Army Chorus will perform at the ceremony and also at 11 am at the First Division Museum.

Two other Medal of Honor events are planned:

- **On Sept. 1, the Robert R. McCormick Museum** at Cantigny will unveil a special exhibit featuring the Medal of Honor awarded to McCormick's father-in-law, Dr. Bernard John Dowling Irwin (1829-1917). "The Fighting Doctor" received his Medal of Honor in 1893 for action in the American West on the eve of the Civil War. Irwin's story is unique; his actions were the earliest to warrant the medal, and the action occurred prior to the 1862 creation of the Medal of Honor award by the United States Congress. Irwin owned two medals, his original and a later-design version. Both will be on exhibit through September.

"We are honored to have these special objects on exhibit and grateful to the Irwin family for loaning us these precious family heirlooms," said Diane Gutenkauf, director of the Robert R. McCormick Museum. "Visitors will also see one of Irwin's scrapbooks and a portrait of Irwin painted by Amy McCormick."
- **On Sept. 2, the First Division Museum** will host an evening program featuring medal recipient Allen J. Lynch and photographer Nick Del Calzo. Lynch will speak about his experiences and Del Calzo will discuss the making of *Medal of Honor: Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty*. The program, part of the museum's popular "Date with History" series, begins at 7:30 pm and will include a book signing. Doors open at 6:45 pm. Admission and parking are free.

The First Division Museum routinely exhibits four Medals of Honor in its permanent collection and tells the stories of all 33 soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division who have received the award since 1917. A fifth medal, on loan from the family of World War I First Division recipient Samuel I. Parker, also is on exhibit. In addition, the museum plans to feature the story of 1st Division Specialist Ross A. McGinnis, the most recent recipient, who was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for action in Iraq in 2006.

More information about these and other upcoming events and programs are online at Cantigny.org and FirstDivisionMuseum.org.

For information about the 2009 Chicago Commit to Courage Medal of Honor Convention, scheduled for Sept. 15-19, visit cmoh2009chicago.org. The McCormick Foundation is a major sponsor of the convention.

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About the McCormick Foundation

The McCormick Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to strengthening our free, democratic society by investing in children, communities and country. Through its grantmaking programs, Cantigny Park and Golf, museums and civic outreach program the Foundation helps build a more active and engaged citizenry. It was established as a charitable trust in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. The McCormick Foundation is one of the nation's largest charities, with more than \$1 billion in assets. For more information, please visit [McCormick Foundation.org](http://McCormickFoundation.org).

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