

New Bedford to hold ceremony honoring U.S. soldiers, sailors lost in WWII's Exercise Tiger

"The City of New Bedford Veterans' Advisory Board will honor the 749 United States sailors and soldiers who lost their lives during the devastating April 28, 1944 attack on the United States military training operation, Exercise Tiger.

Exercise Tiger was a D-Day dry run that was ambushed by a German E-boat flotilla and resulted in America's costliest incident of World War II, second only to Pearl Harbor. The surprise attack sank two American vessels and severely damaged a third. This year marks the 79th anniversary of Exercise Tiger.

A memorial ceremony is planned to honor the service members who perished in this incident on Saturday, April 29, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at the Exercise Tiger Memorial at Fort Taber Park, 1000 Rodney French Boulevard in New Bedford. In case of inclement weather, the indoor ceremony will be held inside the Fort Taber Military Museum, also located at Fort Taber Park immediately adjacent to the Exercise Tiger Memorial.

The ceremony will include remarks by Mayor Jon Mitchell and guest speakers from the New Bedford Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. Families of the late Louis Souza, Vincent Ricciardi, and William O'Connor, Exercise Tiger participants, will be recognized. Presenting the memorial wreath will be the family of PFC Justin Kirby. PFC Kirby was a native of New Bedford who was killed in a vehicle accident while conducting a large-scale military training exercise at Fort Irwin National Training Center in California on March 9, 2020. PFC

Kirby was assigned to the Regimental Headquarters and Regimental support squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Irwin.

Additional participants will include the United States Army Brotherhood of Tankers, WWII reenactors, and local veterans' organizations. All veterans are invited to attend and are asked to proudly display their service insignia.

Refreshments will be available inside the Fort Taber Military Museum following the service. For more information about the ceremony, contact Peter Clark, Chairman of the Exercise Tiger Service, at peter.clark@newbedford-ma.gov."-City of New Bedford.