



**96th Infantry Division
Monument Dedication**

**July 24, 2014
11:00 am**



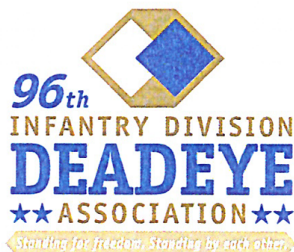
Fort Snelling National Cemetery

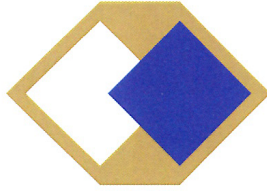
Mallon Road off of Wold Circle

Minneapolis, Minnesota



In commemoration of the 69th Anniversary of the Battle of Okinawa
April 1 to June 30, 1945





The 96th Infantry Division

U.S. Army
World War II

The 96th Infantry Division was activated on August 15, 1942 at Camp Adair, Oregon, under the command of Major General James L. Bradley. The Division trained at Camp Adair; Fort Lewis, Washington; Bend, Oregon Maneuver Area; Camp White, Oregon and Camp San Luis Obispo, California. The Division then departed San Francisco on July 25, 1944 for Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The Division sailed from Hawaii for the October 5, 1944 landing on Yap Island. The Yap operation was cancelled en route and the 96th Infantry Division then led the return to the Philippines, landing on Leyte Island on October 20, 1944.

The 96th Division then seized Leyte beaches on landing, Hill 120 and Catmon Hill. Moving inland, they defeated major Japanese resistance at Tabontabon and took all assigned objectives. The Division was instrumental in crushing the attack of the 2nd Parachute Brigade on Central Leyte Valley airfields. The Division then completed the Leyte mop-up and prepared to depart for the Ryukyus Campaign.

The 96th Infantry Division landed on Okinawa on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945. The Division continued ceaseless attacks against heavily defended Japanese positions including Kakazu and Tombstone Ridges. Against intense resistance, they captured Tanabaru and Maeda escarpments. In May, 1945, the Division captured the Dick Hill mass and Conical Hill, breaking the right flank of the main line of Japanese resistance. The Division then moved south, seizing the final line of Japanese resistance on the Yuza-Yaeju escarpments and completing mop-up of enemy resistance on June 30, 1945.

In late July of 1945, the 96th Infantry Division sailed from Okinawa to Mindoro Island in the Philippines to prepare for the planned invasion of Japan. The Division ultimately returned to the United States in January, 1946 and the “Deadeye” division was officially disbanded on February 3, 1946 at Camp Anza, California.

During its lifetime, the 96th Infantry Division killed 30,000 Japanese troops while suffering almost 13,000 casualties, a very heavy price borne by those we honor here today, including Deadeyes buried at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.



The 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association expresses its sincere appreciation to Fort Snelling National Cemetery and all those who assisted in today’s Wreath Laying program.

Program



Welcome

Donald Klimkowicz, President,
96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association

Sound Attention

(Please stand)
Bugler

Post the Colors

Memorial Rifle Squad at Fort Snelling
Color Guard

National Anthem

The Graner Brothers

Pledge of Allegiance

Donald Dencker
Company L, 382nd Infantry
Board Member, 96th Infantry Division Association and Association Historian

Greetings

John G. Knapp
Fort Snelling National Cemetery

With Thanks to the Deadeyes

Daisy Wallenmeyer

On Behalf of the State of Minnesota

Placing of Wreath

Robert Siefert and wife Ruth Siefert
Company E, 381st Infantry

Rifle Salute

Memorial Rifle Squad at Fort Snelling

Taps

Bugler

Benediction

(Please stand for the Benediction and Retiring the Colors)

Retire the Colors

Memorial Rifle Squad at Fort Snelling
Color Guard

Fort Snelling and Fort Snelling National Cemetery



Fort Snelling National Cemetery is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The original Fort Snelling was established in 1805 near the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. However, it was not until 1820 that a permanent post named Fort St. Anthony was constructed under the supervision of Col. Josiah Snelling. Gen. Winfield Scott was so impressed with the conditions at Fort St. Anthony during his first inspection in 1824 that he recommended the installation be renamed Fort Snelling. Its original purpose was to keep peace on the western frontier, but in 1855 as the frontier moved further west, troops were withdrawn from Fort Snelling. With the outbreak of the Civil War, the fort was reopened and functioned as both an assembly ground and training camp for Minnesota volunteers. It remained open at the end of the Civil War and continued to be used as a training center. In 1947, the Fort Snelling Military Reservation was deactivated as a post, although it continues to function today as the headquarters for the 88th Army Reserve Command.

Fort Snelling cemetery was established in 1870 to serve as a burial ground for the soldiers who died while stationed at the post. Following World War I, as new legislation expanded the eligibility requirements for burial in a national cemetery, the citizens of St. Paul organized a petition to designate a national cemetery in their area. In 1937, Congress responded with legislation that authorized a portion of land at Fort Snelling Military Reservation for this purpose. Fort Snelling National Cemetery was established in 1939 with the first burial on July 5 of Capt. George H. Mallon, whose acts of heroism at Meuse-Argonne in France were recognized with the Congressional Medal of Honor. Following the dedication of the new cemetery, arrangements were made for the exhumation of the remains of those buried at the older post cemetery and the re-interment of the 680 soldiers who served from 1820-1939 buried in Fort Snelling National Cemetery. The 1930s were also a major boom era for national cemetery growth. Fort Snelling National Cemetery is one of seven NCA properties developed during the period between World War I and World War II to serve large veteran populations in cities across the country. During World War II, Fort Snelling processed over 300,000 inductees, including many future Deadeyes (96th Infantry Division). In May 1960, Fort Snelling Air Force Station transferred 146 acres of land to the national cemetery. One more land transfer of 177 acres followed in 1961, bringing the cemetery to its present size. Because of the frigid winters, about 1,000 graves are dug each fall to be used for winter interments. Fort Snelling National Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016.

Fort Snelling National Cemetery is the final resting place of eight Medal of Honor recipients and numerous other dignitaries. Its main thoroughfare features a memorial pathway that is lined with a variety of veteran's memorials. Today there are 78 such memorials at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Most of these memorials commemorate soldiers of 20th-century wars, including the monument dedicated to the 96th Infantry Division on July 24, 2014.

