

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Shannon McMullan

601-359-3227

Governor Musgrove Proclaims “Black Thursday”

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove has proclaimed October 14, 2003, as “Black Thursday” to remember the tragic events that happened to the 8th Army Air Force in the town of Schweinfurt, Germany on October 14, 1943.

“Mission 115 which became known as “Black Thursday” in American military history was one of the greatest air battles of World War II,” said Musgrove. “It is an honor to recognize the men that bravely gave up their lives 60 years ago and the men who survived those events. They are our heroes and because of the men and women who don the military uniform, we are free people in a free country.”

On October 14, 1943, the 8th Army Air Force, also known as the Mighty 8th, dispatched 291 heavy bombers to the to Schweinfurt, Germany, more than 800 miles away. Upon arrival at the target, the bombers were attacked by approximately 1,100 enemy fighters. Both sides suffered great casualties; 60 bombers, 600 airmen, and 276 people on the ground perished and many became prisoners of war.

In the mid 1970’s the survivors of the Mighty 8th, decided to form an organization to commemorate their fallen comrades-in-arms. They named the organization the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association, Inc. (SSMA), giving it a direct connection to the second air raid on Schweinfurt.

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