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## Lemanu-Talauega Administration Continues Annual Memorial Day Wreath Ceremony to Honor the Fallen

*“Today, we pause in solemn remembrance and reflect on the legacy of all those who have fought and made the ultimate sacrifice.”*



On May 29, 2023, it was a solemn morning with the dawn breaking, and American Samoa was slowly waking up to celebrate Memorial Day. Memorial Day is a day of national remembrance born of compassion and empathy in honor of every patriot who courageously made the ultimate sacrifice to safeguard our way of life. It was a clear morning for the four wreath presentations planned by the Office of Veteran’s Affairs under the leadership of Director Paepaetele Mapu Jamias.

As Lieutenant Governor Talauega Ale and Good Lady Marian Ale disembarked on the MV Manu’atele at 6:30 am, simultaneously, Governor Lemanu arrived at the Satala Cemetery. The wreath presentation by Lt. Governor Talauega and Good Lady Marian were in remembrance of those whom we have lost at sea. Likewise, Governor Lemanu laid the second wreath to remember Korean fishers and other foreigners laid to rest here in American Samoa. He then continued the third wreath presentation laid at the Utulei Tramway on Mauga Alii, recognizing those who have perished during the tragic US Navy plane crash in 1980.

The fourth and final wreath presentation concluded with a commiserate ceremony at the Veteran’s Memorial Monument in Tafuna. The program promptly began at 7:45 am with opening remarks by SFC Fa’afetai Lauti. The invocation and benediction was performed by Governor’s Chaplain Rev. Mageo Patolo Mageo and hymn selections were sung by the Office of the Governor’s Special Choir.

During Governor Lemanu's memorial day special address he mentioned, "Countless unsung heroes have left a lasting impact on the history of our Nation. Their sacrifices serve as a living example of the cost of freedom". He continued, "Today, we pause in solemn remembrance and reflect on the legacy of all those who have fought and made the ultimate sacrifice. In no way can we ever repay the debt we owe to those who cannot be here with us today. Today, we also remember the families of those who have passed as they continue to keep their memories alive."

May we never fail to remember that freedom is not free!

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