FOSTER ELLIS MEMORIAL
JUNE 21, 1997

THERE ARE TWO EXHIBITS AT THE MAINE MUSEUM AT AUGUSTA THAT I THINK ARE WELL KNOWN TO MANY OF YOU GATHERED HERE TODAY TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF FOSTER ELLIS.

ONE EXHIBIT IS A PIECE OF THE FLAG OF THE SIXTEENTH REGIMENT OF MAINE. THE SIXTEENTH FOUND ITSELF IN THE PATH OF CONFEDERATE
ONE OF THE PIECES FOUND ITS WAY INTO THE MUSEUM.

THE OTHER EXHIBIT IS A PIECE OF THE FLAG TAKEN FROM THE DESTROYER U.S.S. NEWCOMB ON WHICH TEENAGER FOSTER ELLIS WAS THE RADIO OPERATOR. THE NEWCOMB MADE A TORPEDO ATTACK ON JAPAN'S BIGGEST BATTLESHIP YAMISHIRO DURING THE BATTLE OF SURIGAO STRAITS ON
OCTOBER 23, 1944. THE BATTLESHIP SANK. THE NEWCOMB WENT ON FROM THERE TO A SUCCESSION OF GREAT ENGAGEMENTS ACROSS THE WIDE PACIFIC TO THE BATTLE OF LEYTE GULF IN WHICH THE POWER OF THE JAPANESE NAVY WAS DESTROYED. SEVEN KAMIKAZE AIRCRAFT ATTACKED THE NEWCOMB. THE FIRST ONE HIT THE NEWCOMB AMIDSHIP WHERE A FEW MINUTES EARLIER FOSTER ELLIS WAS STATIONED.
Other attacks followed until the ship was afire from stem to stern and everything above the waterline but the bridge was destroyed. Eighteen men were killed, 75 missing and 64 wounded. The Newcomb gun crews continued to fire manually at oncoming planes, and crews from an adjoining destroyer helped fight the fires.
The destroyer was saved. It was towed back to San Francisco where it was decommissioned and dismantled. Captain I.S. Cook cut up the flag and gave a piece to Foster and to each member of the crew. A citation was authorized by the Secretary of the Navy, stating that the men of the Newcomb had "added new luster to the finest tradition of the U.S. Navy" and
WERE ENTITLED TO WEAR A RIBBON COMMENDING THEM FOR THE NEWCOMB'S GREAT CAREER.

IN OCTOBER 1994, FOSTER ELLIS GAVE HIS PIECE OF THE FLAG TO THE MAINE MUSEUM AT AUGUSTA.

THE BATTLEFIELD AT GETTYSBURG WHERE THE SIXTEENTH REGIMENT SAVED THE UNION ARMY IS THE SITE OF MANY MEMORIALS AND IT WAS THE SCENE
WHERE LINCOLN DELIVERED HIS FAMOUS GETTYSBURG ADDRESS. THE SCENES OF THE GREAT BATTLES OF FOSTER AND HIS COMRADES ARE DOTTED ACROSS THE WASTES OF THE PACIFIC AND WILL NOT BE MARKED BY MONUMENTS OR SPEECHES. IF THE NEWCOMB'S HEROICS HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN PENOBSCOT BAY THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN AS CONSPICUOUSLY OBSERVED
AS THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG. BUT THEY WERE FAR AWAY. YET THEY WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN. IN THE MAINE MUSEUM OR ELSEWHERE FOSTER AND HIS COMRADES, WHEREVER THEY ARE, MUST BE GLAD TO KNOW THAT "THE FLAG STILL FLIES."

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The Family of Foster Ellis asks you to Participate in a Celebration of Gratitude.

Foster touched the lives of many people in all walks of life and we invite you to share your memories with us and one another on Saturday, June 21st from 11 am - 1 pm at the Ellis home - Naskeag Pt. Rd. - Brooklin.