



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“There was no question that the future of the world was going to be different.” – Lilli Hornig, Manhattan Project

THE DAY THE BOMB DROPPED
PREMIERES SUNDAY, AUGUST 2 AT 9 PM ET/PT ON
SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL™

**One-Hour Special Narrated By Golden Globe® Nominee Dominic West
Marks The 70th Anniversary of Hiroshima Bombing That Helped End A War
And Usher In The Atomic Age**

NEW YORK, July 24, 2015– A gripping new one-hour special from Smithsonian Channel relives the fateful day 70 years ago when the United States dropped a single bomb on Japan, destroying the city of Hiroshima and killing up to 70,000 people instantly. Narrated by Golden Globe nominee Dominic West (*The Affair*), **THE DAY THE BOMB DROPPED** premieres on Sunday, August 2 at 9 p.m. ET/PT on Smithsonian Channel.

Written and directed by Leslie Woodhead (*The Hunt For Bin Laden; 9/11: The Day That Changed the World*), **THE DAY THE BOMB DROPPED** gives an hour-by-hour account of the events of August 6, 1945, from the perspective of those who lived through it: the crew of the Enola Gay, the scientists who constructed the bomb, and the people on the ground in Hiroshima whose lives would be changed forever.

Using rarely seen archive film, news reports, radio bulletins and the personal memories of eyewitnesses, the film relives the drama of an event that launched the Atomic Age. It features the last known interview with Theodore “Dutch” Van Kirk, the Enola Gay’s navigator, who died last year.

Other first-hand accounts include:

- Russell Gackenbach, the navigator of the follow-up aircraft escorting Enola Gay and the last surviving member of the mission.
- George Elsey, the only surviving member of President Harry Truman’s administration and the man who broke the news to the President that the bomb had been dropped.

- Robert Krohn and Lilli Hornig, key scientists on The Manhattan Project.
- Tetsushi Yonezawa, who at 11 years old was with his mother on a crowded tram only 750 yards from ground zero. All the other passengers were killed by the blast.
- Yoshie Oka, who was working in a communications bunker and managed to send the first news of what happened in Hiroshima.
- Setsuko Thurlow, who as a 13-year-old high school student found herself buried under a collapsed building after the attack.

The film takes viewers through the development of the atomic bomb, codenamed the Manhattan Project, which was authorized by President Roosevelt in December 1941 and eventually employed 130,000 people working in total secrecy. Roosevelt died before he could see it tested, and the decision to use the weapon fell to his successor, President Truman. U.S. forces had ordered 500,000 Purple Heart medals in preparation for what would almost certainly be a bloody invasion of the Japanese homeland. Instead, Truman chose to launch the first-ever atomic bomb in hopes of ending the war with a single stroke.

Van Kirk recounts the dramatic moment when the Enola Gay released the uranium-fueled bomb they called “Little Boy.” “It took 43 seconds for the bomb to reach 1,800 feet, so we were all counting ‘thousand and one, thousand and two, thousand and three...’ and we had concluded that the bomb was a dud. Suddenly there was a bright flash in the airplane. That was the only indication we had that the bomb had gone off.”

At his Hiroshima school, 7-year-old Takashi Tanemori experienced the shockwave that followed the blast. “The entire sound of the universe just exploded, and the bang,” he recalls. “That sound almost split my skull, and that sound – so loud.”

THE DAY THE BOMB DROPPED captures life-changing experiences, in real-time, from both sides of the war: the relief and exhilaration of Americans who felt they had saved their fellow soldiers from a deadly invasion, as well as the horror of Japanese citizens who had followed their militaristic leaders into a devastating war – and now paid a terrible price.

THE DAY THE BOMB DROPPED is produced by Finestripe Productions for Smithsonian Channel. Executive Producer is Sue Summers. Lorraine McKechnie is Producer. Leslie Woodhead wrote and directed. Executive Producers for Smithsonian Channel are David Royle and Charles Poe.

Smithsonian Channel™, owned by Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, is where curiosity lives, inspiration strikes and wonders never cease. This is the place for awe-inspiring stories, powerful documentaries and amazing entertainment across multiple platforms. Smithsonian Channel combines the storytelling prowess of SHOWTIME® with the unmatched resources and rich

traditions of the Smithsonian, to create award-winning programming that shines new light on popular genres such as air and space, history, science, nature, and pop culture. Among the network's offerings are series including *Aerial America*, *Million Dollar American Princesses*, *Boomtowners*, *Mighty Ships*, *Mighty Planes* and *Air Disasters*, as well as critically-acclaimed specials that include *Civil War 360*, *9/11: The Heartland Tapes*; *MLK: The Assassination Tapes* and *The Day Kennedy Died*. Find out more at www.smithsonianchannel.com.

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