

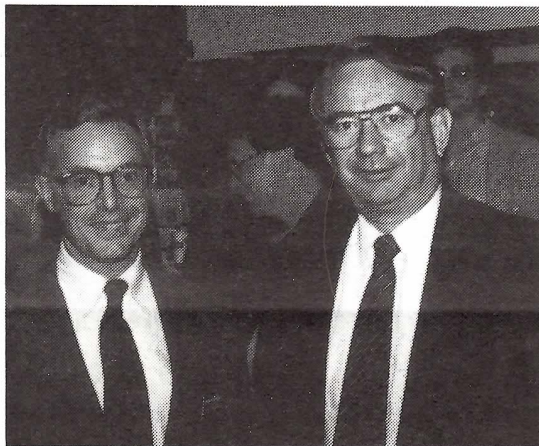


# THE BUGGLE

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation

## Governor Attends Museum D-Day Lecture

*By Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin*



Dr. Zeitlin and Gov. Thompson

Governor Tommy Thompson attended the April historical lecture sponsored by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Governor and Mrs. Thompson also came to the reception following the lecture, interacting with others in attendance and spending several hours in the new Veterans Museum.

Professor Stephen E. Ambrose presented "America Strikes Back: the G.I.s on Omaha Beach," as part of the Veterans Museum World War II Commemorative Lecture Series. Ambrose's remarks were based on his just published and highly acclaimed



Stephen E. Ambrose

book D-Day June 6, 1944: the Climactic Battle of World War II. The audience reacted enthusiastically to Ambrose's material, and raised numerous questions. Professor Ambrose is among the most respected American historians with sixteen books to his credit, including prize winning biographies of Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon.

WDVA Deputy Secretary Robert Cocroft introduced the evening's program held at the filled to capacity auditorium of the State Historical Society. Cocroft explained how the Veterans Museum contributed to the agency's educational mission. More than 300 people were present.

The next presentation in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum initial World War II Commemorative Lecture Series will be held on Saturday evening September 24. Professor Russell F. Weigley of Temple University will discuss "Fire Power versus Mobility: the Structure of the American Army in the Campaign for France and Germany." Weigley is the dean of American military historians and a fine speaker.

The Veterans Museum expects to develop a second series of World War II Commemorative Lectures. Lectures dealing with various aspects of World War II are now being planned. Depending on funding, the new series could start in the spring of 1995.



# CURATOR'S CHRONICLES

*By William Brewster*

Since the last Curator's Chronicles appeared, a large amount of material has been donated to the museum. Surveying the various types of artifacts, it occurred to me that our readers are often the first persons contacted about potential donations. As many of you handle requests regarding donations, it might be helpful if I outlined some of our collecting interests.

In general, the Veterans Museum collects materials related to military service and veterans' activities. In particular, items related to military combat field service and the activities of little known veterans' groups are of great interest. The dress uniform is the most commonly encountered item from military service. The Veterans Museum has a large number of dress uniforms from all branches of service and a good collection of uniforms from the larger veterans' organizations dating from the 40s to the present. Dress uniforms that are unique, however - custom tailored, very old, from a renowned person, or unusual units like the "Marine Raiders" would be of value.

When approached by a potential donor, I first inquire about the origin of the item or items.

Historical background information is of vital importance when dealing with artifacts. A pair of World War II combat boots are interesting. A pair of combat boots worn by John Doe from Mercer while a member of the Army of Occupation in Japan in 1945 are an important part of history.

The best approach when dealing with a potential donor is to find out if the material is associated with a particular individual and to obtain a list of items. This information will help us to determine if the materials are within the museum's scope of collecting.

We are always looking for field uniforms and equipment of the type usually confiscated before leaving the theater of operations. Although rare, some of this material has survived. Many objects may not seem important to a veteran, yet these are the very items which are the most difficult to obtain. Souvenir materials such as lighters, silk pillows from bases, sweetheart mementos and other items purchased in the PX or at local bazaars all help to tell the story of Wisconsin's veterans. If you have referrals or further questions please contact me at (608) 267-1790.

## VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS MAKE MAJOR DONATIONS

*By Karen Gulbrandsen*

At the April 14th meeting of the Board of Veterans Affairs, the Disabled American Veterans of Wisconsin and the VFW of Wisconsin each made contributions to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation. State Commanders Howard Ver Hagen and Robert Munro delivered \$10,000 checks on behalf of their organizations to Secretary Raymond G. Boland.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation accepts contributions in support of the museum. Last year, donations to the Foundation helped to fund the "D-Day and

the Liberation of Europe" lecture series, a new kiosk for the computer exhibit entitled "Search for Wisconsin Civil War Soldiers," a campaign to advertise the museum's programs, and numerous artifacts needed for display.

The Foundation recognizes the DAV and the VFW and thanks these groups as well as other veterans' organizations and individuals for their generous gifts. The continued support of the veterans' community ensures that the state's military heritage will be preserved for generations to come.



# D-DAY PROGRAM

*By Karen Gulbrandsen*

To commemorate the 50th Anniversary of D-Day, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum enlisted the help of two living history interpreters and a veteran.



**Dave Zajicek and Richard Roberts demonstrate WWII equipment.**

Richard Roberts and Dave Zajicek, two local World War II reenactors, demonstrated the personal equipment used by GIs during the D-Day battle. Dressed in World War II uniforms, the reenactors explained the use of many different types of equipment.

Later in the afternoon, Milo Flaten recalled his experiences on June 6, 1944 as a rifleman. Drafted into service in 1943, Flaten served with Company E, 116th Infantry, 29th Infantry Division which came ashore at H-Hour, D-Day at Omaha Beach.

About 250 people participated in the programs and two local television stations covered the museum's events.

## VETERANS MUSEUM ASSISTS "VOICES FROM VIETNAM" BOOK

*By Mark D. Van Ells*

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin (SHSW) is currently in search of letters, photographs, and other archival materials from Americans serving in the Vietnam War, and plans to publish the collection in a book entitled "Voices from Vietnam" in late 1995 or early 1996. Last Spring, the SHSW sought the assistance of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs in locating appropriate letters. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum is happy to assist the SHSW in this important endeavor by stepping up our Vietnam-era collecting efforts and making our holdings available to SHSW researchers.

An April press release mentioned the museum's participation in the project, and Secretary Boland has kindly devoted space in his regular veterans' newspaper columns to our efforts. Since April, many Vietnam veterans have expressed interest in the book,

but few have actually donated letters. If veterans are not yet ready to part with their letters and photos, they may be loaned to the Veterans Museum for examination, copying, and possible inclusion into the book. Donated materials will become part of the museum's growing archive of military and veterans' history. In July, Teddy L. Duckworth (Juneau CVSO and President of the Board of Veterans Affairs) donated over 100 letters from his years of service in the Marine Corps, including his two tours in Vietnam, an extremely valuable historical resource.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum and the State Historical Society will seek Vietnam War letters until the Spring of 1995. If you or someone you know has letters and would like them to be considered for publication, please contact me at the museum. My phone number is (608) 267-1790



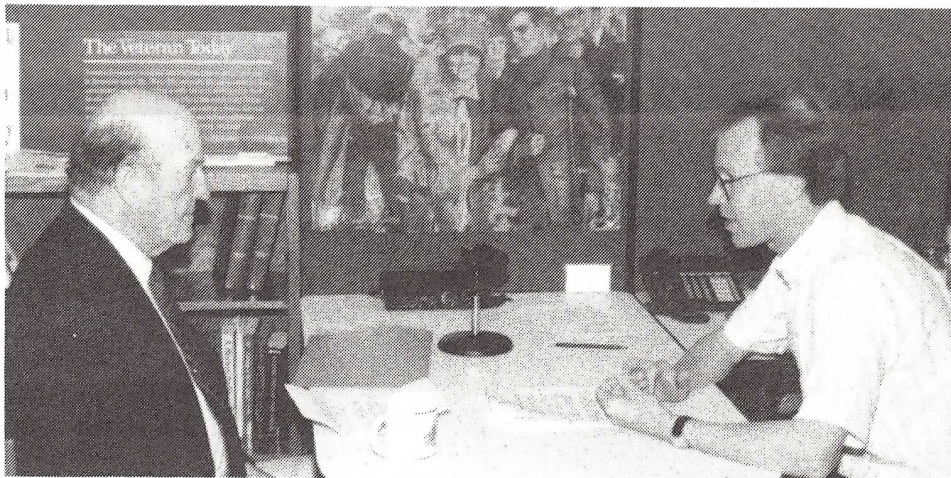
by  
Mark D.  
Van Ells

# CORNER

## ARCHIVIST'S

The past three months have been some of the busiest ever for the museum's archives and library. In April, we began a major archives and library collections building effort. We distributed flyers to museum patrons, and sent press releases to CVSOs and state veterans' organizations regarding our collecting efforts. Since then, we have received many interesting donations, both large and small, from veterans of numerous conflicts. Many historical items which might otherwise have been thrown away have now been saved.

I would like to thank all our donors over the past months, but some deserve special recognition. Mr. Alfred Wickesberg of Menominee Falls donated the letters of his Uncle Charles, a German immigrant and soldier in the 26th Wisconsin Infantry, killed at Resaca, Georgia in 1864. Thanks to the efforts of State Senator George Petak, World War II Navy veteran George Wanserski of Racine donated 778 letters written by him and his family members during the war. Finally, Professor Edward M. Coffman has donated several boxes of books for our library since last October. In addition, he persuaded the Grace Episcopal Church of Madison to donate the war letters of a deceased member, Major John Beffel, a World War I surgeon assigned to Base Hospital 22 in France.



Mark Van Ells  
interviews  
Milo Flaten  
for the Oral  
History  
Project.

The Wisconsin Veterans Oral History Project (WVOHP) got off the ground in early June with the interview of D-Day veteran Milo G. Flaten. Dr. James McIntosh, a tireless museum volunteer, was instrumental in encouraging the project and supplying the first batch of interviewees. To date, more than twenty state veterans have either been interviewed or are scheduled to be. The project is currently focusing on World War II veterans, but veterans of all conflicts and eras are welcome to participate. The activity is ongoing; about one interview will be conducted each week. The WVOHP allows those who served in war to describe their experiences and preserve these memories for future generations. If you have suggestions for interview candidates, please contact me at the museum.

Finally, the museum's major archives holdings are now registered in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC), published by the Library of Congress in Washington. As a result, our most significant manuscript collections now appear on RLIN, a national computer database of historical materials. This will allow historians from across the country to learn of our collections, and possibly use them in their research. I expect that in the coming years more and more scholars will be attracted to the archives as a result of NUCMC.



# MUSEUM RECEIVES RAVE REVIEWS AND NATIONAL AWARD

By Steve Olson

An article in the prestigious "Journal of American History" asserts that the Wisconsin Veterans Museum on the Capitol Square "is in all likelihood the most stunning history museum of its size in the United States today."

In the June edition of the journal, published by the Organization of American Historians, Dennis K. McDaniel of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission thoroughly critiques the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

He writes: "This carefully conceived and stylishly executed ten-thousand square-foot exhibition covers, with a dense and evocative collection, the participation of Wisconsin's soldiers in all of the nation's wars from the Civil War through the Persian Gulf."

The author praises the museum for presenting an "intellectually substantial story that conveys, as well as museum exhibits and text

panels can, up-to-date, serious, historical interpretations."

Commenting on the review, Museum Director Richard Zeitlin said, "The museum has received many compliments from historians and the public. We've enjoyed critical acclaim and an outstanding attendance figure of nearly 112,000 visitors since we opened in June 1993."

The museum also won an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History, which sponsors the nation's most distinguished competition for recognition of achievement in the preservation and interpretation of local, state and regional history.

The museum, located at 30 W. Mifflin St., Madison, is open from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday. There is no charge for admission.

## IF YOU WERE STATIONED AT OR EMPLOYED BY:

**YUMA TEST BANCH, IMPERIAL DAM, YUMA, AZ**  
(WWII -- 1949, U.S. Army)

**CAMP LAGUNA, YUMA, AZ**  
(WWII - U.S. Army)

**YUMA TEST STATION, YUMA, AZ**  
(1951 - 64, U.S. Army)

*Your memories are needed for a history project.*  
*Please contact Arizona Historical Society,*  
*Carol Brooks, 240 Madison Ave., Yuma, AZ 85364*  
*Tel. 602-782-1841*

**25% OFF . . .**

- *Pins*
- *Patches*
- *T-Shirts*



- *Caps*
- *Postage Stamps*
- *Flags*

**. . . 50th Anniversary of WWII  
Commemorative Souvenirs**

Now through September 30th,  
save 25% on purchases of World War II Commemorative Souvenirs  
at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Gift Store

NEWSLTRS\DTPDVM2.PM5

**WISCONSIN VETERANS MUSEUM FOUNDATION**  
Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin, Executive Director  
30 West Mifflin Street  
Madison, WI 53703