

# ★★ **THE BUGLE** ★★

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## Stephen Ambrose Publishes New Book

by Richard H. Zeitlin

Stephen Ambrose, one of the nation's best-known historians, appeared at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum on November 7 to talk about and autograph copies of his newly released book, *Citizen Soldiers*. Ambrose's popularity as a speaker drew a sizable audience to the museum.

Ambrose became nationally famous with the 1994 publication of *D-Day: The Climactic Battle of World War II*. The author of sixteen well-respected books about U.S. military and political history, *D-Day* was his first bestseller. Professor Ambrose followed it up with the widely acclaimed *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*, which sold more than 750,000 copies. Now, Ambrose has returned to Second World War themes to accompany the U.S. Army from the hedgerows of Normandy to the surrender of Germany.

*Citizen Soldiers* is a social history of the campaign for France and Germany. Ambrose gives his readers a fox hole view of events. This is not a book about grand strategy. It is about the ordinary GI Joe who overcame all obstacles to achieve total victory in the titanic military struggle of the twentieth century, and perhaps of all time. Ambrose reminds



*Stephen Ambrose reads excerpts from his new book, **Citizen Soldiers**, at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum on November 7.*

us that it was America's high school graduates of 1942, 1943, and 1944 who brought down the vaunted German army. Their sacrifices produced an unalloyed triumph that still resounds to the credit of the United States and its people. The strength of American Democratic society was embodied by its citizen soldiers.

Ambrose explains, "Only a tiny percentage of them wanted to be there, but only a small percentage of these men failed to do their duty."

Ambrose made extensive use of oral history materials for the book. He

interviewed hundreds of veterans, including Wisconsinites Jim Underkofler, Robert Weiss, and Phil Stark. German veterans also provided interviews. When combined, the first hand accounts of second world warriors

reveal the human dimension of the European Theater of Operations.

According to Ambrose, the human dimension of the Second World War presented the most critical challenge to the United States because fashioning a military force capable of beating the Germans required much more than feats of industrial production. People were the principal ingredient of victory, and in this area Americans ably demonstrated a willingness to do what was necessary.

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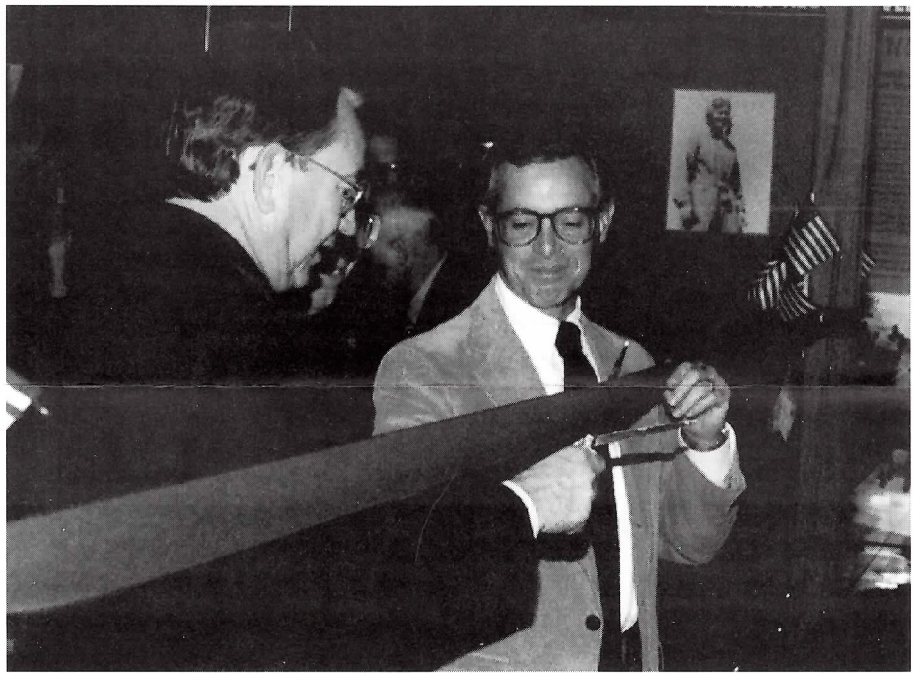


# Curator's Chronicles

by William Brewster

Welcome to another addition to the Curator's Chronicles. On November 11, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum opened the new exhibit *They Also Served*. This exhibit highlights the activities of civilian organizations and individuals who worked with the military during times of war. Recent acquisition of objects from civilian service groups inspired the exhibit. How do civilian service organizations relate to the American veteran? Indeed, civilians have played a key role in every war fought by the United States.

The large scale mobilization of civilian organizations to support a war effort has not been seen in the United States since the end of World War II. The youth of America have no memory of organizations such as the USO, the Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), and the Merchant Marine. For those who lived through World War II these names are synonymous with national unity and sacrifice. The USO grew out of the melange of civilian groups that supported the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I. To create a more effective means for providing aid and assistance to United States forces during the Second World War, these groups formed the United Service Organizations. The USO boosted morale and com-



*Governor Thompson cuts the ribbon to officially open the exhibit *They Also Served* at a ceremony on Veterans' Day.*

ported millions of Americans serving far from home through its diverse activities during World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

The Merchant Marine and the WASPs were two organizations made up of civilians that worked directly under the supervision of the United States military during the Second World War. When the United States entered World War II, all commercial shipping fleets came under military control. These sailors and their ships were the lifeline that supported the American war efforts in Europe and the Pacific. The WASPs recruited women to pilot military combat and transport aircraft to coastal locations for shipment to the front. Because of the great risk and military nature of their duty, both the Merchant Marine and WASPs have been awarded veterans' status.

The American Red Cross has played an important role in America's conflicts since the Spanish-American



*They Also Served features a figure of Bob Hope entertaining the troops with the USO.*

## THE BUGLE

Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation

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*The new exhibit features several Wisconsinites, including Dickey Chapelle, a photographer who was killed during the Vietnam War.*

War. Working with the United States military, the Red Cross operated hospitals and recuperation centers relieving some of the burden placed on the medical corps. The enormous job of coordinating blood collection in the United States began with the Red Cross during World War II. This activity would define the role played by the Red Cross during times of peace and war. Many American servicemen owe their lives to the untiring work of the American Red Cross.

In addition to large organizations, many individual American civilians have played a role in this nation's conflicts. The people of the news media have been on the front lines bringing the story home. These civilian reporters and photographers risked their lives along with the troops in an effort to provide the story that often goes untold. For such dedication there is a price. Wisconsin's Dickey Chapelle, who photographed soldiers in three wars, was killed by a land mine while on patrol with Marines during the early stages of the Vietnam War.

*They Also Served* will bring to light the efforts of civilians for a new generation of Americans who may not know or understand what it means to work united, as a country, for a common goal. Until next time....



*Don Fellows speaks at the exhibit's opening reception about his experiences as a Merchant Marine during the Second World War.*

## Ambrose from page 1

*Citizen Soldiers* talks about dirt, food, bullets, blood, and death. Ambrose presents the thinking and feelings of the front line troops and conveys their sense of what was happening. The operations of small units and individual soldiers is paramount to Ambrose's account. The big picture of the Allied campaign against Germany is included and clearly explained. But for the big picture, Ambrose relies on works by such historians as Russell F. Weigley, from whose *Eisenhower's Lieutenants* he "stole materials profitably if shamelessly."

The real strength of *Citizen Soldiers* is Ambrose's writing style. As with other Ambrose books, *Citizen Soldiers* is enjoyable to read as well as informative. Ambrose selects topics of high interest, and his ability to communicate a love of subject matter is clearly evident. It is easy to understand why Professor Ambrose is popular. *Citizen Soldiers* is a fine work in every sense.



# ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

by Mark D. Van Ells

On November 10, 1997, World War II veteran W. E. "Bill" Tritz of Waukesha, Wisconsin was the 200th Badger State veteran interviewed by the Wisconsin Veterans Oral History Project (WVOHP) of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

Tritz was born in Chili, Wisconsin in 1924. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942. Based in Italy, he served as a radio operator on a bomber in the 15th Air Force. He flew more than twenty combat missions over southern and eastern Europe before being shot down over Vienna, Austria in December 1944. With the help of the Czechoslovak underground, Tritz managed to evade capture by the Nazis, and he eventually reached Russian lines. He returned to the United States in 1945. He is presently writing a book about his wartime experiences.

The Wisconsin Veterans Oral History Project began in June 1994 with the interview of D-Day veteran Milo Flaten of Madison. Of the first 200 of those interviewed, 162 saw service during World War II, thirty-nine during the Korean War period, nineteen during the Viet Nam years, and seven from other conflicts (several veterans served in more than one war). Veterans of the U.S. Army accounted for more than half of all interviews, with a total of 103 (not including the Army Air Force of World War II); the Air Force accounted for thirty-eight interviews, the Navy thirty-four, the Marine Corps seventeen, the Merchant Marine two, and the Coast Guard one. Three subjects were civilians. In addition to veterans of U.S. military service, the museum has also interviewed veterans of foreign lands who now reside in Wisconsin, including an Englishman, a German, and a volunteer for the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War.

All interviews are recorded, transcribed, and made available to qualified historians for research purposes. In the study of military history, the voices of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are vital to gain an understanding of war, its effects, and its costs. The WVOHP seeks to preserve this knowledge for future generations.

For more information about the Wisconsin Veterans Oral History Project or any other museum programs, please contact the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 30 West Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703 or email: [museum@mail.state.wi.us](mailto:museum@mail.state.wi.us).

## Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center to Open January 6, 1998

by Mark D. Van Ells

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center will open its doors to the public on January 6, 1998. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum has been collecting books and manuscripts, along with war-related objects, since its creation in 1901. The museum, however, has not had a suitable facility to maintain public hours for the materials until now. The acquisition of additional museum office space in early 1997 made room for the research center.

Initially, public hours for the center will be somewhat limited. It will be open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. All materials will remain non-circulating, but photocopies of most items may be made at the discretion of the center's staff. Although access to the library stacks will be unrestricted, those patrons wishing to view the manuscripts in the archives (letters, diaries, oral history interviews, etc.) will be required to complete a researcher registration form. It is strongly suggested that those persons wishing to view manuscripts contact the center ahead of time.

The Research Center is located in Room B200, 30 West Mifflin Street, on the Capitol Square in Madison. Access to the facility is through the main elevator for the 30 West Mifflin building. On Saturdays, however, researchers will be required to gain access to the center through the museum's exhibit galleries.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center contains more than

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## Research Center, *from page 4*

5,000 books and periodicals related to the history of the American military and U.S. veterans' affairs. The library has a particularly good collection of soldiers' and sailors' narratives. The manuscripts in the archives consist of the personal papers of individual Wisconsin veterans and the records of Badger State veterans' organizations, as well as recorded oral history interviews with more than 200 Wisconsin veterans.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center seeks volunteers. If you are interested, please contact Mark Van Ells or Richard Harrison at (608) 267-1790, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 30 West Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703, or email: [museum@mail.state.wi.us](mailto:museum@mail.state.wi.us).



*Reba Eslinger (center) and Richard Zeitlin (right) accept a donation from the Military Order of the Purple Heart of \$600.00 on behalf of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation from Jerry Gallenberg (left), representing the MOPH.*



*On Saturday, November 8, the Wisconsin Army National Guard demonstrated field gear and medical procedures during Meet the National Guard day at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Participants had the opportunity to tour a "humvee" ambulance and a mobile repair truck. At stations inside the museum galleries, visitors could experience night vision goggles, try on chemical protection gear, test radio and communications equipment, and taste "Meals Ready to Eat" (MREs). Above, a cub scout troop test the field gear with the help of a guard soldier.*



*Roxanne Owens of the Ho-Chunk Preservation Department presented a program on the Road of the Ho-Chunk Warrior on October 25 at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Using slides and encouraging discussion, Owens talked about the warrior tradition of the Ho-Chunk. The Ho-Chunk Preservation Department also loaned the museum a photographic exhibition on Ho-Chunk warrior. The photographs will be on display until January 1, 1998.*



# Calendar of Exhibitions and Events

**November 11, 1997–January 1, 2000:** *They Also Served*, exhibition on the history of non-service organizations such as the Red Cross, Merchant Marine, and the USO who have supported military efforts throughout our history.

**January 15, 1998–March 18, 1998:** *The Healing of a Vietnam Veteran*, a photographic display dealing with the aftermath of Vietnam and its effects on Wisconsin veterans. Photographs by David Stremer.

**April 4, 1998–May 18, 1998:** *Shouts From the Wall*, an exhibit of posters and photographs brought home from the Spanish Civil War by American volunteers.

**April 9, 5–7 p.m.:** *The Spanish Civil War* lecture by Professor Stanley Payne of the University of Wisconsin-Madison at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

**April 17, 5–7 p.m.:** *The Abraham Lincoln Brigade* roundtable discussion led by Professor Stanley Payne of the University of Wisconsin-Madison at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

**April 24, 5–7 p.m.:** *George Orwell and the Spanish Civil War* lecture by Professor Norman Sacks of the University of Wisconsin-Madison at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

**May 8, 5–7 p.m.:** *Jumping the Line: Adventures and Misadventures of an American Radical* book signing and lecture by author William Herrick, a veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

**May 30, 1998:** *When Johnny Comes Marching Home: the Return of the Second Wisconsin Infantry*. A living history event with an encampment at Camp Randall and a parade to the Capitol Square.

**August 15, 1998:** *The Boys in Blue Rally Once Again*. A living history event portraying the Union citizen-soldier with a concert by the First Brigade Band at the Wisconsin Veterans Home, King Wisconsin.

**August 18, 1998–January 1, 1999:** *Picture This...WAR*, an exhibit showcasing the photography of Vietnam veterans and chronicling their experiences.



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