

THE BUGLE

NEWSLETTER OF THE WISCONSIN VETERANS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

Frontline

CANNON RETURNS TO CAPITOL SQUARE

In October, a cannon originally displayed on the Capitol grounds more than 100 years ago returned to the Capitol Square. The story of that cannon and how it came to Madison is a true piece of Wisconsin history.

ing them useless. Following the Union victory, the regiment sent one of the cannons back to Madison as a trophy.

The cannon was engraved with the story of its capture, and exhibited at the Capitol Park. In the ensuing century, the field piece made its way to the Camp Randall Memorial Park near the stadium of the same name. Earlier this year, with the old reproduction wooden carriage in disrepair, Museum staff and Daniel Einstein, program manager for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Facilities Department decided that the historic gun would be better served by exhibit in a venue where thousands could learn about its history. With the gracious help of Dennis Benson and other staff from the university's machine shop, the cannon made its way from Camp

Randall to the Museum's 19th Century Gallery. We invite you to come and view this historic gun knowing the history of how it came to Madison.

By Bill Brewster



The cannon was moved from Camp Randall (above), prepared for exhibit (right), and then placed with the museum's Civil War exhibits (bottom right).



In April 1862, at the Battle of Shiloh, members of the 14th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry faced an ominous task. Fire from a Confederate battery, the Washington Artillery of New Orleans, raked the regiment's position. Asked if his regiment could silence the guns, the 14th Wisconsin's commanding officer, Colonel Messmore, responded in the affirmative and led the regiment in a charge across a contested field, chasing Rebel infantry and taking the battery. Though the guns changed hands several times during the battle, members of the regiment successfully spiked the artillery pieces, render-



Photos by Bill Brewster

INSIDE:

Faces in the Sand

Civil War Battle Flags

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Vietnam Photography

2007 Annual Report

and more...

The Bugle

The purpose of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum is to commemorate, acknowledge, and affirm the role of Wisconsin veterans in America's military past by means of instructive exhibits and other educational programs.

The Bugle is a publication of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation which serves to further the Museum's mission by providing funds for the acquisition of artifacts, exhibit production, and development of educational programs.

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Mon.- Sat.
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Sunday Noon - 4 p.m.
(April-September)

Director's Corner

“FACES IN THE SAND”

COMING IN 2009

Faces in the Sand, an exhibit focusing on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, will soon be produced by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. The 1,000 square foot display is scheduled to be installed in the changing exhibit gallery during February of 2009. Collections staff of the Museum have been collecting artifacts, objects, photos, film, letters, and other relevant materials for some time. In fact, the Museum has already sponsored a series of well attended public educational programs on the topic of Iraq and Afghanistan in addition to two photographic displays about military operations there.

Jeff Carnes Collection, WVM



One of several photos that may be exhibited

“Faces in the Sand” will tell the story of Wisconsin men and women who served during the present war. It will include uniforms and equipment as well as personal items of Wisconsin soldiers, thereby providing an overview of daily life in the modern military. The display will also rely on video and audio components to help create a realistic atmosphere along with replicated environmental features of the type that characterizes other displays within the Museum. “Faces in the Sand” represents a major exhibit development project, and will be on public view for two years.

The Veterans Museum also plans to install a display highlighting the role of National Guard members serving in Iraq

and Afghanistan at the Wisconsin National Guard Museum. The Wisconsin National Guard Museum situated on the grounds of Volk Field near the community of Camp Douglas is operated by the Veterans Museum. The Iraq/Afghanistan display component for the National Guard Museum will be developed simultaneously with the Madison exhibit and is scheduled to be installed shortly afterwards. As many Bugle subscribers know, not since World War II has the Wisconsin National Guard played as active a combat role as it is presently doing.

The challenges of the new exhibit development involve subject matter interpretation. The Iraq/Afghanistan conflict is a current event. Context, background, and perspective—critical elements in any historical project—are only partially developed or subject to change. The incompleteness of the record is also impacted by the heat of political partisanship or controversy. The Museum welcomes the passion since it will hopefully increase public interest in the display, and seeks to avoid making errors of judgment that might arise without the full story being known. We want our lights, in other words, to be on Wisconsin's citizen soldiers and intend to approach the historical interpretation issue with that focus in mind.

By Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin

WVMF

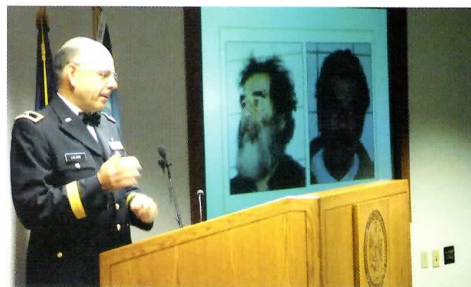
A TRIBUTE TO FREEDOM

Thanks to all who attended the 6th annual *A Tribute To Freedom* Gala on November 10. Proceeds from the event will support the “Faces in the Sand” exhibit. A special ‘thank you’ to the evening’s sponsors:

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Laura Kocum

Keynote speaker, Brig.Gen. Lalich discusses his work as Saddam's military-appointed physician

From the Registrar

FORWARD

WISCONSIN'S CIVIL WAR BATTLE FLAGS ENTER NEW AGE

Of the thousands of objects here at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, the Wisconsin Civil War battle flags are undoubtedly the most precious. Carried in numer-

In the coming months Wisconsin Veterans Museum staff will be working to bring the Civil War battle flags to the people of Wisconsin in a new way. A battle flag website is being developed which will feature detailed photographs, unit histories, battle accounts, soldier's stories and input from amateur and professional researchers. We intend the website to be interactive and will be soliciting your input, questions, requests and research. We will also address the question of preserving the flags- what has been done, what remains to be done and how you might help.



WWM Collections

National battle flag of the 8th Wisconsin

ous notable battles throughout the Civil War, blood stains and bullet holes are evidence of their dramatic history. The flags, or colors as they were known, were the pride of the unit. Many soldiers gave their lives to defend the colors and their unit's honor.

The G.A.R. Memorial Hall was established in the state capitol in 1901, in large part to preserve and display the Civil War battle flags. When the capitol burned in 1904, bystanders rushed in, broke the display cases and carried the flags to safety. They knew how precious the flags were and risked their own lives to preserve them for the next generation. The flags belong to us all and are an important part of Wisconsin's proud military heritage.

Unfortunately few people of Wisconsin are able to view these beautiful flags in person. Although there is a display case in the galleries, the fragile condition of the flags limits how often they can be handled or displayed. And many people who live in the state simply can't make the trip to Madison at all.

As we research and write the text for the new website, we thought readers of the *Bugle* might be interested in hearing the stories of the flags as well. Whether they're stories you've heard countless times or they're new to you, these tales are truly an incredible part of our state's history. Look for highlights in upcoming issues, and please watch for an announcement when the website debuts early next summer. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum would like to give special thanks to Mr. Alan Hembel for his support of this project. Please send any ques-

tions or comments regarding the battle flags or new website to me, Kristine Zickuhr, at kristine.zickuhr@dva.state.wi.us or (608) 261-6802.

By Kristine Zickuhr



WWM Collections

Regimental battle flag of the 7th Wisconsin

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From the Archives

COLD WEATHER COMBAT AND SURVIVAL

The following events are part of the Madison Winter Festival (www.winter-fest.com), held on Saturday and Sunday, February 2 and 3, 2008.

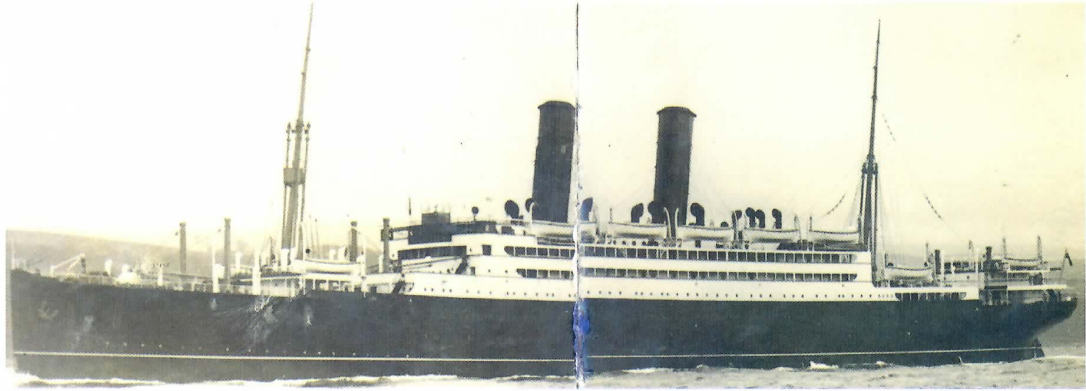
"How Soldiers Survived the Cold"

Sat., Feb. 2, 2007 –
10:30-11:30 a.m.

How would you survive the bitter cold of North Russia, Germany, or Korea? What would you use to stay warm? How did soldiers keep their fingers and toes from freezing? Join us for this special family program highlighting the various kinds of equipment soldiers used to stay warm during cold weather operations. Participate in several interactive and engaging activities which will allow all learners to better appreciate the hardship of war in the winter.

An additional Winter Festival program is listed in the opposite column on page 5.

LIKE A SIREN TO DESTRUCTION: THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE *TUSCANIA*



Edward T. Lauer Papers, WWM

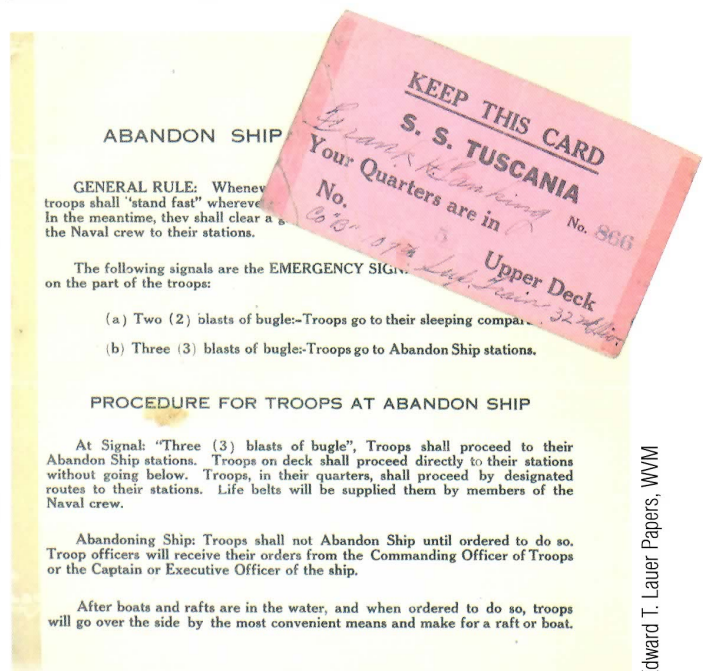
U.S.S. *Tuscania*

On February 5, 1918, a ship carrying over 2,000 American troops, including a large proportion from Wisconsin, was sunk by a German U-boat off the north coast of Ireland. The *Tuscania* was the first American military transport ship to be sunk and its destruction outraged the American public and fanned the flames of war. The 90th anniversary of the sinking will be commemorated at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum by a manuscript exhibit in the Research Center.

The 550 foot long, 14,000 ton *Tuscania* was built in 1914 and made several trips across the pond and back carrying both Canadian and American troops to England. Her final, fateful voyage began on January 24, 1918 at Hoboken, New Jersey. The 32nd Division, composed largely of Wisconsin and Michigan National Guardsmen, was well represented aboard the ship by the 107th Engineer Train, 107th Military Police, 107th Supply Train, and several replacement detachments for the infantry regiments in the Division. After joining a convoy of other ships in Halifax, Canada, the *Tuscania* continued across the Atlantic toward the port at Le Havre, France. As the sun set on February 5, 1918, the ship found itself in the North Atlantic Ocean, seven miles off the northern coast of Ireland and in prime "submarine zone," waters regularly

patrolled by German U-boats.

Around 6:00 pm that night, a torpedo fired by German U-77 hit the *Tuscania* on the starboard side near the engine room. All the lights on the ship went out and chaos ensued as men



Edward T. Lauer Papers, WWM

Abandon ship instructions from the *Tuscania*

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Continued-From the Archives

sought to escape the quickly sinking ship. Several life boats fell empty into the water before men could get on them, others were under filled, and many men found themselves floating helplessly in the dark. Other ships from the convoy picked up hundreds of survivors, but more than 200 men lost their lives in the explosion and the icy waters of the North Atlantic.

The survivors were reorganized in Great Britain before going on to France and service in World War I. The 32nd Division, of course, earned the "Red Arrow" nickname during this war by piercing every enemy line in front of them. Two years after the war, the Red Cross erected a monument on the Isle of Islay to the men from the *Tuscania* who died on the night of February 5.

Following the war, the survivors of the

incident formed the National *Tuscania* Survivors Association (NTSA), with many members living in Wisconsin. Interestingly, the NTSA invited the captain of German U-77, Wilhelm Meyer, to their annual reunion in 1933 to speak about his memories of the sinking of the *Tuscania*. While the invitation contained no hard feelings and was an earnest effort to learn more about this event that affected so many lives, Meyer declined. He did, however, exchange correspondence with the NTSA and shared his memories in that way.

The NTSA continued to meet through the late 1970s, but today the WVM Research Center keeps their story alive. The

papers of Edward Lauer, a Milwaukee native who served as the historian of the NTSA for many years, contain administrative records, correspondence, newspaper clippings, and photographs regarding the sinking of the *Tuscania* and the history of the NTSA. Included are the letters from Wilhelm Meyer, NTSA membership cards, "Abandon Ship" instructions from the

Tuscania, and a program from a benefit event held in Britain shortly after the sinking to raise funds for the *Tuscania* survivors. There are also numerous reminiscences from survivors of the *Tuscania* that contain their impressions of the event.

These and other items from the WVM archives and library will be on display beginning in February 2008. Come visit the Research Center on the 3rd floor to see the exhibit, along with thousands of other collections preserving the stories of



Dr. Wilhelm Meyer
.....
Fernsprecher Nr. 2460
.....

German U-boat captain Wilhelm Meyer corresponded with the *Tuscania* survivors.

Wisconsin's veterans. While the exhibit will only be on display for several months, the materials used to create it are available to the public in the Research Center daily, Monday – Friday from 9:00 – 3:30 p.m.

By Russ Horton



Winter Festival Programs, continued

"777 Epilogue – Cold Weather Combat"

Sat., Feb. 2, 2007 –

1:30-2:30 p.m.

Join us for this special reprisal of our popular summer program series, "7 Weeks, 7 Wars, 7 Objects," as we discuss combat and warfare during the winter months and the various pieces of equipment that made it possible. Since the Civil War, American soldiers have had to deal with all types of climates, but none more daunting than bitter cold. From the canvas tent Pvt. Edward Bridgman used on the snowy 1864 Siege of Petersburg to the camouflage smock Capt. Ralph Ramsay used during the post-World War I Polar Bear Expedition into North Russia, view several unique pieces of Wisconsin and American military history during this one-time event.

Edward T. Lauer Papers, WVM

Upcoming Exhibit

AN INSTINCT FOR LIGHT: THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF ROBERT J. ELLISON

On February 5, 2008, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum will debut a new photographic exhibition titled *An Instinct for Light: The Photography of Robert J. Ellison*. Ellison, a photojournalist whose family currently resides in Milwaukee, was killed at Khe Sanh on March 6, 1968 when NVA ground fire struck his C-123 cargo plane, causing it to crash. He, along with nearly four dozen Marine replacements, died in the crash. Sadly, Ellison was only 23 years old at the time. The exhibit features eighteen images from Ellison's short, but extensive, career as a photojournalist. From 1965 to 1968, Ellison covered the Civil Rights Movement, the coup in the Dominican Republic, and the war in Vietnam, all of which are featured in this exhibition. The exhibit will also highlight Ellison's childhood, family life, and professional life through a scrapbook that features candid photographs, letters, artwork, and other ephemera.

Robert Ellison was born on July 6, 1944 in Ames, Iowa. The son of Albert Jackson "Jack" Ellison, a lieutenant in the 11th Airborne Division, and his wife, Miriam, Ellison found himself surrounded by his family's rich military history. His great-grandfather founded the Western Military Academy in Alton, Illinois, where Ellison would eventually attend high school. Nearly everyone of age, including two of his aunts, served in the military during World War II.

In early 1945, 23-year old Lieutenant Jack Ellison was killed at Luzon, Philippines. Robert, six months old at the time, never met his father. Miriam later married Russell Eaton, a career Naval officer, a close friend of Jack Ellison's from their days at Western Military Academy. The Eatons lived all over the world, eventually settling in Milwaukee in the early 1960s.

Ellison graduated cum laude from Western Military Academy in 1963 and enrolled at the University of Florida, intent on becoming a herpetologist and overseeing a snake and reptile house at a zoo. He frequently used photography to document his research, and quickly taking to it, soon became a staff photographer for the school's newspaper, *The Alligator*. Ellison covered news and sports for the paper, and honed his craft in his spare time by taking underwater photos while scuba diving in the swamps around Gainesville.

Ellison eventually decided to make photography his career. His photographs for *The Alligator* earned him freelance work on the Civil Rights trail with *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines,

while his sense of adventure lured him to the Dominican Republic to cover the political unrest in May 1965. Earlier that year, he traveled to Honduras to serve as an American press observer for the presidential elections. Despite the professional success that resulted from these projects, Ellison knew there was one place he had to visit to become a legitimate photojournalist – Vietnam.

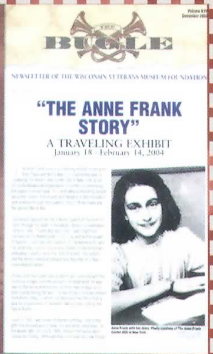
During the Vietnam War, the military exempted men of draft age whose fathers had been killed in World War II or Korea. Despite this, and his mother's urgings, Ellison felt compelled to record the story of American soldiers honestly. Shortly before leaving for Vietnam, Ellison brought his mother to meet *Ebony* Executive Editor, Herbert Nipson. Over dinner, Ellison's mother remarked, "You know that he is exempt from military service as an only surviving son. He doesn't have to go, but he wants to go. He's going to get himself killed and I can't stop him."

Once he arrived in Vietnam, Ellison caught on with photographer James Pickerell, who later sold his business to



Soldier from the 82nd Airborne on guard duty in Santo Domingo, May 1965

Ellison Exhibit



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on WVM
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Preserving History

ANNUAL REPORT

WISCONSIN VETERANS MUSEUM FOUNDATION, FY 2007

Funding

Total donations received: \$183,716
 Grants: \$11,511
 Donations & Special Events: \$154,741
 Government Contributions: \$2,500
 Royalty Revenues and Interest Income: \$14,964

WVM is an activity of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. The Museum's state allocated budget covers operating and staff expenses. Programs and exhibit costs are generally covered by grants and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation.

Museum Attendance

Total visitors to the galleries: 71,744 (30,758 students)
 Total volunteer hours: 4,623
 Gift Shop Sales: \$94,070 (Avg. Daily Sales = \$220)

Educational Programs

Annual program attendance: 3,175
 Number of programs provided: 30
 Average attendance at each program: 82
 Travel trunk outreach: 2,092

Exhibits

Permanent Exhibit: *A Tribute to Freedom*
 Changing Exhibit:
In the Belly of the Dragon: Life and Death in I-Corps
 Traveling Exhibits:
Wings of Freedom, aviation photographs by Joe Oliva
The Art of War, Vietnam veteran artwork from the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum in Chicago

Research Center and National Guard Gallery

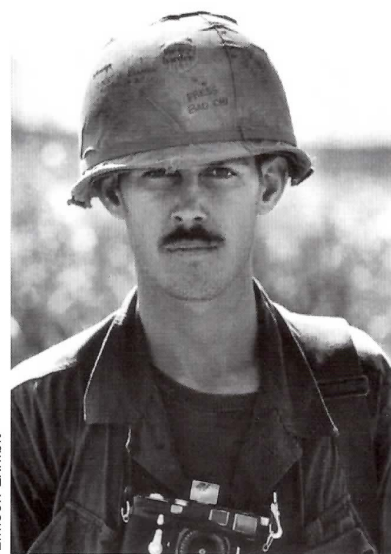
Object donations to collections: 513
 Manuscript collections processed: 43
 Total oral history interviews to date: 1,686

Off-Site Facilities

WVM operates two additional off-site facilities. The Wisconsin National Guard Museum (WNGM) is located at Volk Field, and is currently under redevelopment. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum at King is a single gallery display hosted by the Wisconsin Veterans Home.

Attendance at WNGM: 8,010
 Attendance at WVM-King: 7,500

Continued - Upcoming Exhibit



Ellison Exhibit

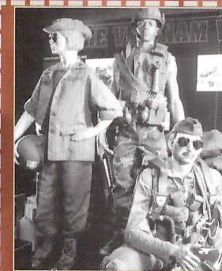
Ellison in Vietnam, early 1968

Empire News and Photography. He soon established himself as one of the up-and-coming photographers in Vietnam. Ellison worked tirelessly, poring over contacts, writing his own captions, doing his own research,

and never stopped shooting, even when darkness fell. Ellison was in Vietnam from fall 1966 through early 1968, and shot covers and articles for *Aviation Week*, *TRUE*, *TIME*, and *Newsweek*.

While he was not a proponent of the war, Ellison's passion for the soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen he covered shows in his photographs, capturing their every thought and emotion. His loyalty to them eventually cost him his life, as he was returning to Khe Sanh to repay a debt to a group of Seabees when his plane crashed on approach. Just before leaving for Khe Sanh, he learned that his image of the ammunition dump explosion at Khe Sanh would be the cover for the March 16, 1968 issue of *Newsweek*. The image of the explosion, along with the eight others in the magazine, remains as Ellison's finest and best known work.

By Jeff Kollath



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