



## August 15, 1945: V-J Day



*President Truman informs reporters of Japan's surrender at a press conference in the Oval Office. August 14, 1945. (photo courtesy of Time Life)*

Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration calling for their unconditional surrender on August 15, 1945 (August 14 in the United States) marked the end of World War II, three years, eight months, and seven days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. While the official signing of the surrender took place on September 2, 1945 aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, victory was celebrated in the United States, Britain, and Australia with a two-day holiday beginning on August 15. Soldiers and civilians alike rejoiced in the streets of cities across the United States and Europe. When the announcement came at 3 a.m. in Hawaii, every ship in Pearl Harbor set off its store of rockets.

Amidst the celebrations, the gravity of the situation was not to

be forgotten. King George VI addressed the British people from Buckingham Palace, saying: "Our hearts are full to overflowing, as are your own. Yet there is not one of us who has experienced this terrible war who does not realize that we shall feel its inevitable consequences long after we have all forgotten our rejoicing today." These consequences are still felt today. Of the almost 300,000 American combat deaths during World War II, more than one-third occurred in the Asia-Pacific Theater. This "Victory in Japan" Day should serve not only as a day to remember the final Allied victory, but also as a day to remember those who so nobly lost their lives fighting and winning the war in the Pacific Theater.

*From the Desk of Robert M. Edsel*

### Reuniting People

As my friend Lynn Nicholas reminded me following the Washington, D.C. ceremony to honor the Monuments Men and women, our work is not about art and war as much as it is the lives of human beings and their feelings. One of the greatest joys for me has been the opportunity to reunite...and in some cases, unite for the first time, family members of Monuments Men. That materialized in the largest number during the Washington ceremony, but there have been other occasions that have followed. Each time someone tells me how this story has touched their life, how it has given rise to them starting a regular dialogue with someone else who was also affected, I experience a moment of grace.

A few days ago I received a wonderful email from the daughter of one of our beloved Monuments Men, recently departed, Salvatore Scarpita. His daughter, Lola, attended the ceremony and the luncheon that followed and brought her son and Salvatore's grandson, Spencer. Her kind note is but one of many I have received. All convey a similar message.

Lynn is correct: this is a people story, each with their own take on the events and impact of what took place so many years ago. There is still so much to learn, and so much to share.

(Please see page 6 for a photo and an excerpt from Lola's kind message.)



## Monuments Men in the Far East



*Monuments Man Laurence Sickman.  
(photo courtesy of the Nelson-Atkins  
Museum of Art, Kansas City)*

Following the Japanese surrender, it became immediately apparent that a group similar to the MFAA in Europe would be needed in the Pacific Theater. Even before the official surrender on September 2, MFAA Officer Lt. Cdr. George Stout, who had served with the MFAA in Europe for a year and a half, and Laurence Sickman, an Asian art specialist and curator at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, recommended that a MFAA section be established. The result: the Arts and Monuments Division of the Civil Information and Education Section of GHQ of the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers in Tokyo. Asian art expert Langdon Warner recommended Howard Hollis, cura-

tor of Asian art at the Cleveland Museum of Art, to direct the division. Hollis assumed his position in September, 1946, and subsequently appointed Sherman Lee as his assistant. Charles Gallagher and Alfred Popham served as occupation inspectors, and Georgina Potts was the office secretary. Stout, Sickman, and Warner were also stationed in Tokyo as part of the Arts and Monuments division. While it was a small team, they were able to accomplish much. Their duties included making inspections of the art and monuments of Japan, determining what was destroyed or damaged, and assisting the Japanese in protecting and preserving their artistic heritage. The section also promoted the display of Japanese art and the democratization of museums. Archives officers were also dispatched to the Pacific Theater. In the summer of 1945, Major Arthur E. Kimberly arrived in Manila to survey the state of archives in the Philippines. In Japan, Captain Collas Harris was assigned to the Monuments and Arts Division and ensured that the division's directives included measures to protect and preserve the country's archives.

## *The Rape of Europa* at Chesapeake Energy

*The Rape of Europa* was screened at the Chesapeake Energy headquarters last month in Oklahoma City. The company is one of the premiere exploration companies in the United States, with almost 6,000 employees. Chesapeake Energy is a significant supporter of numerous activities in Oklahoma City and across the country, which reflects the commitment of the leadership of the company and board to give back to the community at large. Its CEO, Mr. Aubrey McClendon, is a dynamic, youthful leader who recently had The Blue Room Theater built at the company's headquarters for film screenings and speaking engagements. The film was shown in this theater twice, each time to a full house of more than 250 people. Robert Edsel introduced the film and hosted a question and answer session at each screening.



*Robert Edsel introducing *The Rape of Europa* at  
Chesapeake Energy headquarters.  
(photo courtesy of the Robert M. Edsel collection)*



## Sherman Lee

### *From Monuments Man to Museum Man*

A world-renowned expert on Asian art, Lee served as a Lieutenant in the Naval reserves from 1944 until 1946 in the Pacific Theater. In September of 1946, his former boss at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Howard Hollis, asked him to join the new MFAA division in Tokyo. Lee served as Assistant to the Director under Hollis until 1947, then succeeded him as Director. In his role as a Monuments Man, Lee was able to examine monuments and artworks that were rarely seen by the public. In the Shosoin Imperial Repository in the Japanese city of Nara was a collection of art treasures that only a select group of individuals had ever seen. Through Lee's negotiations, the Japanese government agreed to display the collection, and in September, 1947, it was exhibited publicly for the first time. Since World War II, it has continued to be exhibited annually. In recognition of his service, the Japanese Government awarded Lee the Order of the North Star and the Order of the Sacred Treasures. He also received the Legion of Honor.

Prior to his military service, Lee received both his Bachelors and Masters of Arts from American



*Monuments Men Sherman Lee and Howard Hollis in Japan, 1947.  
(photo courtesy of The Confusion Era).*

University, and his doctorate degree from Case Western University in 1941. He became Curator of Far Eastern Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1941. From 1948 until 1952 he taught at the University of Washington and also was Associate Director at the Seattle Art Museum. In 1952, Lee began his long and distinguished career at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Over the years he served as Chief Curator of Oriental Art, Assistant Director, and Associate Director, becoming Director in 1958. Lee retired from the Cleveland Museum in 1983 and began teaching as an adjunct professor of art history at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Prior to his retirement, he also served as an

art advisor to Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, encouraging them to expand their Asian art collection. As a distinguished Asian art scholar, Lee helped them build a world-class collection, which was later donated to the Asia Society in 1978. Willard Clark also sought his expertise when building his collection of Asian art. The Ruth and Sherman Lee Institute for Japanese Art was founded in his honor at the Clark Center near Fresno, California. Dr. Lee currently lives in Chapel Hill, NC.

To read Sherman Lee's full biography and those of other Monuments Men, please visit our website at:

[www.rescuingdavinci.com/  
HelpSolve/list\\_mfaa.aspx](http://www.rescuingdavinci.com/HelpSolve/list_mfaa.aspx)



## Monuments Man Langdon Warner



Even in the face of the horrendous loss of life and destruction in Japan, Monuments Men were attempting to avoid further damage to the

cultural heritage of Japan much as their counterparts had done in Europe. Leading the way was a remarkable American by the name of Langdon Warner.

Warner served as an expert consultant to the Arts and Monuments Section, G.H.Q. of the Supreme Commander, Allied Powers of Japan from April to September of 1946. During World War II, he appealed to officials in Washington (at the Roberts Commission) for the protection of the former Japanese capitals of Nara and Kyoto during bombings of the country. The cultural heritage of these two shrine cities was preserved due to Warner's tremendous influence. While modesty prevented him from accepting responsibility for saving

the historic sites, the Japanese people were determined to honor him. In recognition of his effort to preserve Japan's rich culture, he was posthumously awarded the Order of the Sacred Treasures. The citizens

of Kyoto also built a memorial shrine in his honor, and those of Nara placed a table in the Buddhist Horyuji Temple.

In civilian life, Warner was an exemplary archaeologist and scholar of Asian art. Having graduated from Harvard University in 1903, he made his first trip to Asia the following year as part of the Pumpelly-Carnegie Expedition to Russian Turkestan. Warner went on to work at the Boston Museum of Art, the American School of Archaeology in Peking, and the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, before returning to Harvard's Fogg Museum as a field fellow, and later Curator of Oriental Art.

Warner was described by John Rosenfeld, Professor Emeritus of East Asian Art at Harvard, as "the United States' first full-time teacher of Asian art, universally



*Memorial shrine dedicated to Langdon Warner in Kyoto, Japan.*

recognized as a voice of reason and compassion." He taught many notable Asian scholars, including fellow Monuments Man Laurence Sickman, Director of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Although he was a museum man for many decades, Warner's true passion was in the field, where he worked as an explorer, archaeologist, and collector of Asian art. It has even been said that he was the inspiration for the character of Indiana Jones. While not true, it's easy to see how such a rumor started.

Following his death in 1955 at the age of 73, Mr. Bernard Leach perhaps best explained Warner's calling when he wrote: "Langdon Warner was more than an expert archaeologist or explorer; he takes a place among the small band of interpreters of Far Eastern wisdom and beauty."





## Special Profile: Actual Films

by *Robert M. Edsel*

Actual Films is an independent documentary film company based in San Francisco, California. In addition to *The Rape of Europa*, some of the films which they have produced that you may have seen are:

- *Lost Boys of Sudan*
- *They Drew Fire*
- *Democracy Afghan Style*
- *Kofi Annan: Eye of the Storm*
- *Wonders Are Many*
- *Nobel: Visions of our Century*

Since our first meeting in 2001, their passion for bringing Lynn Nicholas' epic eponymous work to the screen has been readily apparent. A person doesn't commit more than six years of their life on a single project without being moved to their core to tell such a story. Each filmmaker contributed in their own unique way, whether it was Richard Berge and his incredible skill at finding priceless archival footage and photos, to Nicole Newnham and her remarkable ability to locate key participants, to Jon Shenk's gifted ability to capture an image through the lens of his camera that appears crisper and more colorful than looking at the same object with one's own eyes, to Bonni Cohen, who as executive producer managed to pull all the pieces of the story together and meld a near impossible two-hour telling of it on film.

We are all proud of the end result, a moving film that we hope provides an easy entry point for the broad public to be introduced to this incredible saga, one whose final chapter is only now being written each day.



*Actual Films producers Richard Berge, Nicole Newnham, and Bonni Cohen. (All photos on this page courtesy of the Robert M. Edsel Collection)*



*Filming for The Rape of Europa in Venice, in front of the Church of San Pantaleone. From left: Tami Stepanek, Petr Stepanek, Richard Berge, and Jon Shenk.*



*Filming for The Rape of Europa in Florence, atop Giotto's Belltower. From left: Jon Shenk, Richard Berge, and Petr Stepanek.*



## Reuniting People *(cont. from page 1)*



*Spencer Scarpitta, grandson of Monuments Man Salvatore Scarpitta. (photo courtesy of Lola Scarpitta)*

“Thank you so much for your kind note and the great pictures. They are a beautiful reminder of what a great day that was for my father and all the monuments men and women past and present. I will share them with my mother Clotilde and sister Stella... Spencer will be thrilled for the memory. Not much makes him wide eyed but that very special day that you made happen left him swelling with pride.”

- Lola Scarpitta.

## *The Rape of Europa* Theatrical Release

Our film will make its New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles premieres in September. We expect to have an outstanding opening weekend in all cities. Please encourage your friends and family to see this remarkable film. Also, please note several date changes for other openings on the calendar at right. We are regularly adding more cities, so don't be discouraged if you a city near you is not on the list yet.

### *This month we would like to thank:*

Eric Kampmann, Gail Kump, Jon Teall, Chris Bell, Margaret Queen and all the other wonderful people at Midpoint Trade Books. A special thanks goes to Robin Irwin and Susan Abel at Ingram Books.

For comments on the Monuments Men Newsletter or media inquiries, please contact Elizabeth Ivy: [eivy@laurelpublishingllc.com](mailto:eivy@laurelpublishingllc.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- University of Tennessee** September 19  
Chattanooga, TN
- Global Creative Leadership Summit** September 23-25  
Rockefeller University, New York City
- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art** September 27  
Kansas City, MO
- Spiritual Arts Series** October 14  
University Park United Methodist Church, Dallas
- University Club** New York City November 8
- Florida Atlantic University** January 9  
Jupiter, FL

### THEATRICAL OPENING DATES

- Santa Cruz** August 10  
Nickelodeon Theater
- Monterey** August 17  
Osio Cinema
- New York City** September 14  
Angelika Film Center  
Paris Theater
- Chattanooga** September 21  
Carkmike Bijou 7
- Boston** September 28  
Coolidge Corner Theater  
Landmark Kendall Square Cinema  
West Newton Cineman
- Washington, D.C.** September 28  
Bethesda Row Cinema  
E Street Cinema
- Baltimore** September 28  
Charles Theater
- Los Angeles** September 28  
Laemmle Theater  
Royal Theater
- Cleveland** September 28  
Shaker Square Cinemas
- Tulsa** October 7  
Circle Cinema
- Sacramento** October 12  
Crest Theater
- Dallas** October 19  
Angelika Theater

### OTHER FILM SCREENINGS

- Isis Theater, Aspen** August 13, 5 pm