THE SAFEKEEPERS OF HISTORY
MONUMENTS MEN PROJECT WINS FIRST PLACE IN NATIONAL HISTORY DAY CONTEST

Please join us in congratulating Hannah Scott, winner of the 2017 National History Day Contest!

Her project, The Safekeepers of History: A Monumental Stand for Cultural Preservation During the Second World War, is an impressive achievement which honors the work of the Monuments Men to protect cultural heritage during World War II.

Every year, more than half a million students from all fifty states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and international schools in China, Korea, and South Asia compete in the National History Day Contest sponsored in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. With this year’s theme-“Taking a Stand in History”- as their guide, middle and high school students conducted independent research on a topic of their choice before creating all manner of multimedia presentations.

Only the top entries were invited to the national finals held at the University of Maryland, College Park on June 11-15, 2017. Hannah surpassed over 100 other entries in her category to emerge with the gold medal. Her winning exhibit was displayed at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. and will also be presented at the American Historical Association’s annual meeting in January 2018.

Hannah is a senior at Odessa High School in Odessa, Missouri. No stranger to the prestigious competition, she advanced to the national level four years in a row,
CONTINUING THEIR MISSION

ANTHROPOLOGY RELIC FINDS ITS WAY HOME

In the Fall of 2015, Jennifer St.Germain at the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology — Indiana University in Bloomington requested the Monuments Men Foundation's assistance in returning a ceiling decoration that once hung in the Harnack Haus of the Max Planck Society, a building in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute complex in West Berlin. Featuring a plaster reproduction of a human skull and calipers, the object symbolizes the Anthropology division of the Institute and hung alongside similar symbols that represented the various sciences studied at this learning center.

The skull had been taken in the spring of 1945 by Samuel Perkins, a U.S. Navy Lieutenant assigned to the Economics Division of the Office of Military Government, which was converting the building to an officer's mess hall. He first gave the object to his brother-in-law, Frank M. Setzler, an anthropologist. Upon Setzler's death, the skull returned to Mr. Perkins who decided to donate the item to the Glenn A. Black Laboratory in 1987. Thanks to the collaboration with Ms. St.Germain, Dr. April K. Sievert, Director at the Glenn A. Black Laboratory and Dr. Susanne Kiewitz at the Max Planck Society, the Foundation returned the object to the Society in April.

Postcard showing the skull "in situ" in Harnack Haus prior to the end of the war.

ON HISTORY IN CANADA AND CHANNEL 4 IN ENGLAND COMING IN SEPTEMBER 2017

HUNTING NAZI TREASURE


TAPESTRY FROM HITLER’S EAGLE’S NEST RETURNED TO GERMANY

For Cathy Hinz and her five siblings, the 16th-century tapestry hanging on the wall in their childhood home was nothing special. One of their playful habits was to charge down the stairs together, each brushing the tapestry with one hand on the way down.

The tapestry’s journey to Minneapolis began in 1945, when her father, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Paul Danahy, removed the 7-foot-by-7-foot tapestry from The Eagle’s Nest, Adolf Hitler's mountaintop retreat above Berchtesgaden, Germany, while serving there as an intelligence officer with the 101st Airborne Division. Like many officers, he simply mailed this souvenir of war back home. When Danahy died in 1986 at the age of 71, the work of art found its way to Hinz’s dining room.

In December 2016 the tapestry’s story gained a new chapter when it was formally returned to Germany during a formal ceremony. It will be carefully studied and restored before being placed on display at the Bavarian National Museum in Munich.

"The tapestry has been on a journey, and now it's going home," Hinz said.

It wasn't until viewing similar tapestries during a trip to Italy in 2000 that Hinz thought anything of her inherited dining room decor. Realizing the tapestry she had touched so many times as a child needed to be properly preserved in a museum, she donated it to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. The
museum’s President and CEO, Gordon “Nick” Mueller, then contacted Robert Edsel, a member of the museum’s board.

The Foundation was able to work with the gallery owner, Munich art dealer Konrad Bernheimer, whose family sold the tapestry to Adolf Hitler in September 1938.

"My first reaction was, if you have the invoice then let’s have a look at how much they paid," Bernheimer said. "There are two possibilities: Either it was sold below the actual value — then it would indicate that this was a false sale. Or, it was sold at the full price — then I would not be able to say it’s a false sale." Bernheimer soon ruled out a false sale because the full price — about $10,000 U.S. dollars at the time — was paid. "Not everything that was sold between 1933 and 1945 could be considered a false sale," he said.

With Bernheimer declining to pursue the matter further, ownership of the tapestry passed to the Bavarian State, the heir to items once belonging to Hitler.

Hinz, who traveled to Munich for the return ceremony, feels a welcome sense of closure now that the tapestry has found its way home. "My thought was, you know, it never was ours to begin with. It’s something that came into our lives as a result of a moment in history, but the tapestry itself is so much more than our history with it," she said.

The Foundation hopes this return- and the many more to come — serve as reminders to family members of World War II soldiers to be aware of what items might be found in their homes.

"They’re going to inherit these things, and so this is going to be a good chance for us if we can make sure people are aware of the Foundation to come forward without feeling any sense of concern about getting in trouble — that’s not what we’re about," Edsel said.
By Robert M. Edsel

I first met Bernie Taper in the fall of 2006, shortly after completing my first book about the Monuments Men, *Rescuing da Vinci*. Bernie and his wife, Gwen Head, couldn’t have been more welcoming. We sat for many hours in their home in Berkeley on a beautiful fall day, wine glasses in hand!

Bernie could sure tell a great story. Anyone who knew him instantly recognized his gift. What I appreciated about him was this: he had a lot to say, and it was all worth hearing. Sitting with Bernie reminded me of something a therapist friend of mine used to say in jest...kind of...not really: “Pay attention; you might learn something.” I learned a lot from listening to Bernie.

He began by recounting his long voyage from London to the United States in 1929 onboard a small merchant ship, a boy of just eleven years. Other wonderful stories followed, including how he taught himself German by listening to the radio. His accomplished career as a journalist has no doubt been mentioned today, as well it should: he had a remarkably long and prodigious period as a writer. But my focus is of course his service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army.

Following America’s entry into World War II, Bernie was drafted into the U.S. Army. He worked briefly in the San Francisco shipyards before his attachment to an anti-aircraft battalion. His unit trained in Death Valley in terrain that mirrored the landscape of North Africa. Manning an anti-aircraft battalion proved a short-lived assignment. In Bernie’s words, “The only thing we ever hit was the plane towing the target.”

Like many other immigrants, Bernie became a full United States citizen following Officer Training School at Ft. Benning, Georgia. He then returned to UC-Berkeley to teach English to non-English speaking army personnel.

In 1946 he accepted a position with the MFAA: Monuments, Fine Art, and Archives section. Bernie had become a Monuments Man serving as an Art Intelligence Officer. He described his work as only Bernie could do: “I believed I was doing a useful and decent task instead of some of the things I learned in training, like how to use a bayonet and shoot at people.”

His job involved tracking down missing works of art and returning them to their rightful owner. The MFAA operation was woefully understaffed. Bernie was one of only two Art Intelligence Officers covering an entire nation! The army’s expectations were unrealistic, but he had remarkable success nonetheless. He wisely developed excellent relations with the local German police who kept him abreast of looted works of art that surfaced from time to time. Over time he created a vast network of sources; not too differently than how a great reporter goes about sourcing and developing a story!
During his career as a Monuments Man he interrogated some of the most notorious characters of the Second World War including Albert Speer, Hermann Göring’s art advisor, Walter Andreas Hofer, and Hitler's friend and personal photographer, Heinrich Hoffman to name just a few. But it was his work helping to rebuild the flattened cities of Germany and jump start cultural life that left him with the greatest sense of satisfaction about his service as a Monuments Man. “Our responsibilities included doing what we could to enable the German cultural institutions to recover. It made it seem that our efforts were beyond patriotism, beyond victory; that they were for truth and goodness, which is what art is, a combination of truth and goodness.”

Even the most successful careers include disappointments, and Bernie’s great disappointment was not finding a painting by Raphael, “Portrait of a Young Man,” which the Nazis had stolen from the Czartoryski Collection in Cracow, Poland. Over the years, we spoke of this painting and his efforts to find it on many occasions. Although the painting is still missing, I believe, as did Bernie, that someday it will surface somewhere, and when it does, Bernie will be looking down on us with a smile!

My fondest recollection of Bernie took place during our first trip to Washington, D.C. in 2007, when Congress passed a simple resolution honoring the work of the Monuments Men and Women. This was the first time U.S. government officials recognized these scholar-soldiers’ efforts and formally expressed its gratitude for their service to civilization. Many members of the media wanted to speak to Bernie and the other three Monuments Men who had made the journey. At the end of one of those interviews, hoping to stir up some controversy, the reporter looked at Bernie and asked, “Aren’t you upset that more than sixty years have passed and only now you are being recognized for your service as a Monuments Man?” Bernie smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and said, “I’m just appreciative that it is happening now.” His selfless comment stayed with me, the way similar comments have from others who we rightfully refer to as the Greatest Generation. Bernie made it to Washington a second time, to participate in the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to the Monuments Men, our nation’s highest civilian honor, but it was that moment in 2007 that I shall always remember...his impish smile, his selflessness, his grace.

EXHIBITION HONORING
MONUMENTS MAN MARVIN C. ROSS

Don’t miss the exhibition, “Marvin Ross: Monuments Man,” at Hammond-Harwood House in downtown Annapolis, Maryland. Open now through December 31, 2017, the exhibition explores the contributions of Captain Marvin C. Ross during both his service as a Monuments Man and as trustee of the historic house.

Admission is free to the public during normal museum hours, Tuesday-Sunday from noon-5:00. Docent-led tours of the Revolutionary War-era house are given at the top of every hour for a small fee of $10.

Bryce McWhinnie, one of the Foundation’s researchers, was privileged to share details from Ross’s military field reports during the exhibition’s opening reception on March 30. Other speakers included Rick Struse and Barbara Goyett, the house’s respective President and Executive Director; Rachel Lovett, Curator & Assistant Director at Hammond-Harwood House; and Jane Milosch, Under Secretary for Museums and Research at the Smithsonian Institution.
MINI MONUMENTS MEN

On Saturday, May 13, The National WWII Museum hosted its annual Robotics Challenge. This year’s theme centred on the work of The Monuments Men. Forty teams of students from Louisiana and Alabama gathered in the US Freedom Pavilion: The Boeing Center, putting their LEGO MINDSTORMS® systems and skills to the test. Participating teams were tasked with programming their robots to complete missions that simulated scenarios that the Monuments Men would have faced in saving Europe's cultural heritage during World War II. Additional challenges included constructing a bridge and designing a poster on problem solving.

This year’s grand champion was St. Michael’s of Crowley, Louisiana (in photo). Recognition was also given to teams that excelled in the areas of competition, design, and project. Congratulations to all participants and a thank you to The National WWII Museum, sponsors, and volunteers for hosting an event that promoted the Monuments Men legacy and the importance of respecting the cultural property of others to our youth.

NEW PROJECT AIMS TO SHED LIGHT ON 76 MEMBERS OF THE ACLS

The Foundation is delighted to announce that we will soon have a group of capable researchers-in-training joining our team!

Six undergraduate students from the University of Central Oklahoma are set to undertake an extended research project focusing on the work of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). In early 1943, the ACLS formed a special committee which assembled scholars and researchers alike to create maps, guides, and manuals detailing proper care for cultural objects in war areas. Their combined research became an indispensable resource for officials in Washington, the U.S. Army, and especially the Monuments Men conducting emergency preservation efforts in the field.

Due to the efforts of their supervisor, Prof. Monica Gallamore, Ph.D., these students will have financial backing from an independent grant. In the coming year, they will research and compile short biographies for each of the seventy-six men and women included on the Foundation’s list of ACLS participants. The Foundation will be assisting their efforts and reviewing their work along the way.

We cannot wait to see what they uncover! Stay tuned for future updates on this wonderful and exciting project.
People from all over the world visit Florence to enjoy the city’s innumerable artistic treasures and monuments. So little has changed since that magical period more than six hundred years ago, when Dante’s prose made reading accessible to the masses; Brunelleschi’s imagination resulted in the construction of a dome others had until then considered impossible; Giotto’s lifelike and sensitive depiction of the human figure catapulted painting out of the Dark Ages; and Michelangelo’s creative vision and physical strength chiseled away marble that hid the human forms only he could see.

But there is a far lesser known and more contemporary place in the city’s storied history that also deserves a visit, a place that stands as a permanent reminder of how we have these freedoms today, and who paid for them: the Florence American Cemetery and Memorial.

Located just fifteen minutes south of Florence, along the Greve River, this 70-acre cemetery is the final resting place of 4,402 men — 213 that are known but to God — who fought in the battles to liberate Siena, Florence, Pisa, Bologna, and so many smaller towns in Italy. It also memorializes the 1,409 soldiers missing in action. Of note, six sets of brothers are buried there, and three Medal of Honor recipients are either interred or memorialized as well.

I happened to be in Florence in December and decided that visiting the cemetery with my family would be my birthday present to myself. My father, a World War II Marine Corps veteran of the Pacific Theater, used to tell me, “The most important thing about birthdays is to keep having them.” During the invincibility of my youth, that kind of obvious advice seemed worthless. Frustrated, struggling to find my place in the world, I wanted pearls of wisdom, not another of his silly annual sayings. The passing of time — and dear loved ones, including my dad — provided me with a more enlightened perspective. Wise man was he.

Together, my wife and young son walked the verdant and perfectly manicured grass, pausing to read names on the various gravestones. After about an hour, we stopped by the office of the Superintendent on our way out to sign the guest book and pass along our compliments for how beautiful everything was being kept. Above the guest book was a photo of the Spirit of Peace, the sculpture atop a stone pylon overlooking the entire cemetery, with a short note about the artist who designed it, Sidney Waugh. My wife and I both smiled. Sidney Waugh was a Monuments Man.
Help Us Complete the Mission of the Monuments Men

Name: 
Address: 
Email: 
Phone: 

I would like to make a gift to the Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art:

☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ $500  ☐ $1000  ☐ Other: 

Billing Information

Check Enclosed:  ☐  Please charge my:  ☐ Visa  ☐ Master Card  ☐ American Express  ☐ Discover
Credit Card No.:  ___________________  Expiration Date:  ___________________

Please mail this form to: The Monuments Men Foundation, 154 Glass Street, Suite 106, Dallas, TX 75207

If this donation is given in someone's honor or for a special occasion, please include that information and we will be pleased to send an acknowledgement card or letter.

The Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art is an IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization and charitable donations are tax-deductible as applicable by law.

In October 2016 the Austrian Postal Services unveiled a stamp commemorating the brave individuals — civilian miners, resistance fighters, and U.S. Monuments Men — who saved art from destruction inside the large salt mine in Altaussee, Austria. During the last days of World War II, Nazi bombs set inside the mine threatened to obliterate such masterpieces as the Ghent Altarpiece by Jan van Eyck, Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna, as well as “The Artist’s Studio” and “The Astronomer”, both by Jan Vermeer.

The stamp, shown here, depicts Monuments Man George L. Stout carefully transporting Michelangelo’s Bruges Madonna from the mine.

To report information on missing works of art, please call:

1-866-WWII-ART

To subscribe to our newsletter or for other inquiries, please visit:

www.monumentsmenfoundation.org

www.monumentsmen.com

© Monuments Men Foundation, 2017

All photos courtesy of Robert M. Edsel Collection unless otherwise noted.