HUNTING NAZI TREASURE

Last August 10, 2016 the Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art announced its participation in a new original investigative television series, Hunting Nazi Treasure. The new co-production between Corus Entertainment’s HISTORY Canada and More4 (Channel 4), is being produced by Saloon Media (Toronto) and BriteSpark (UK). Production commenced in September at locations in Russia, Germany, France, Austria, Tunisia, and Chile. Hunting Nazi Treasure will air on HISTORY in Canada and Channel 4 in England in September 2017, and later that year on stations around the world.

The series will feature a team of present-day investigators led by Robert M. Edsel. Joining Edsel on the team are investigative journalist Conor Woodman and World War II historian James Holland. The detective work in Hunting Nazi Treasure will take the team across four continents in search of some of the hundreds of thousands of paintings, documents, and other cultural objects worth billions of dollars that remain missing.

The investigators will be digging for new leads through questioning of top experts and historians of the Nazi era, and sifting through original documents, including de-
On May 4, 2016 Robert M. Edsel, Founder and Chairman of the Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art, announced the donation of two important objects to the Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education and Tolerance. The first was a seven-branch menorah, one of thousands stolen or displaced during World War II as the Nazis exterminated Jewish communities and looted their belongings.

At war’s end, the United States Army faced an enormously challenging and heartbreaking issue: what to do with the hundreds of thousands of religious and cultural objects that belonged to victims of the Holocaust found in the U.S. Zone of Occupation. While the Monuments Men sorted and inventoried millions of books and other cultural and religious treasures stolen by the Nazis, various Jewish organizations united to create an organization known as the JCR (Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc.). The JCR later served as trustee to heirless cultural property and made decisions about the distribution of these items guided by a commitment to perpetuate the cultural heritage of the Jewish people. Over the next few years, they redistributed hundreds of thousands of books, Torah scrolls, and other religious objects to organizations in Israel, the United States, Great Britain, and other countries in Western Europe. The donation of this menorah to the Dallas Holocaust Museum follows in that same vein.

The second object was a wartime album containing 46 tipped-in photographs showing daily work activities of the Monuments Men at the Offenbach Archival Depot, one of three principal collecting points for cultural treasures, in particular books and religious objects, looted by the Nazis during World War II. Monuments Man Corporal Rouben Sami received this album from Monuments Officer Captain Isaac Bencowitz, Director of the Offenbach Archival Depot, in recognition of Sami’s work at that facility. Five Monuments Men have been identified in the photographs, including Monuments Officer Lieutenant Colonel Richard Howard, the third director of Dallas Museum of Art. Included with the album is a handwritten note to Sami from Bencowitz’s secretary. The Rouben Sami album now joins the list of other known albums at the Algemeen Rijksarchief in The Hague; at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem; at the New York Public Library in New York City; and the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

“The Monuments Men Foundation is pleased that after some 70 years, this menorah will now have a permanent and appropriate home at one of our city’s most important cultural institutions, the Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education and Tolerance,” said Robert Edsel. “Now, after a very long journey, it will serve future generations as an ever present reminder of the horrors inflicted on humanity by Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. The Foundation is also excited that the album of photographs documenting the work of the Monuments Men in identifying and returning some of the millions of objects stolen during the war will reside at the Museum. The Foundation continues to receive leads through its toll free tip line 1-866-WWII-ART (1-866-994-4278) about works of art and other cultural items, in particular those which veterans may have
brought home as souvenirs. I would like to thank Ms. Suzanne Sherr, who had possession of the menorah, which she received from a friend of an American soldier who brought it home as a souvenir after the war. We hope her example will encourage others who may have cultural property that was in Europe during the war to contact the Foundation. Our thanks also extend to Rouben and Lee Sami, and to their daughter Renee, for the generous donation of this important album documenting the work of the Monuments Men after the war.

“We’re thrilled to receive this cherished album and beautiful menorah,” said Dallas Holocaust Museum President and CEO Mary Pat Higgins. As symbols of repair and restoration after the horrors of Nazi aggression, as well as of Jewish continuity and perseverance, we will proudly display them in the new facility we plan to build in Dallas’s historic West End. The Monuments Men Foundation, in continuing the work of the Monuments Men, assures that our cultural heritage is protected and restored to its rightful place. The Foundation and its work inspire us to never forget what happened in those dark years and to redouble our efforts to fight prejudice, hatred and indifference for humanity’s benefit.”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

classified intelligence reports, Nazi dossiers, rare archives, and private collections. They will also meet with witnesses, veterans, victims and their descendants to hear their personal stories in the process of developing new clues. “This program presents a unique opportunity to put the Foundation’s extensive records and archives to use, and engage the public in the search for these missing items,” said Edsel. “The Foundation regularly receives leads through its toll-free tip line, 1-866-WWII-ART (1-866-994-4278), and online at wwiiart@monumentsmenfoundation.org. It is my hope that our program will become America’s Most Wanted for culture and lead to the return of priceless objects to their rightful owners. George Clooney’s film introduced the Monuments Men to a worldwide audience; now we have an opportunity to enlist the help of the public to join the hunt for some of the hundreds of thousands of objects still missing.”

DO YOU HAVE A CULTURAL OBJECT IN YOUR ATTIC WITH A WWII CONNECTION THAT YOU THINK SHOULD BE RETURNED?

CALL

1-866-WWII-ART (1-866-994-4278)
Meet Monuments Man Nicholas "Nick" J. Defino! The Foundation located Defino this past summer in the course of completing biographical research for each of the approximately 345 members of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section of World War II. At 92 years of age, Nick Defino possesses an exceptional memory of his wartime experience. And what a storyteller!

In the spring of 1943, Defino had just recently began his undergraduate studies at Seton College, today known as Seton Hall University when, like so many other students, he put his academic life on hold to join the U.S. Army. After a brief stint in basic training in Georgia, Defino—a first generation Italian-American—was originally assigned to an all Italian-American company of men who were to assist during the occupational administration of Italy once the country had been secured by Allied forces. With the Allied invasion of Italy well into the planning stage, training was rushed. Defino boarded the troop transport ship not even having had a chance to practice fire his M1 Carbine.

After sailing across the Atlantic to Casablanca aboard the U.S. Westpoint, Defino joined General Patton’s U.S. 7th Army Group in the North African Campaign and prepared for the invasion of Sicily. Once in Sicily, Defino’s commanding officer assigned him to assist the office of the Advisors on Fine Arts and Monuments to the Allied Military Government of Occupied Territory stationed in Palermo. Defino would later be transferred to the office of the Monuments Fine Arts and Archives Sub-
Commission of the Allied Military Government in Naples in December 1943 making him one of the very first “Monuments Men” in uniform.

Defino remembers fondly his work with Monuments Man Capt. Mason Hammond, the very first official Monuments Officer. “He really, truly [was] a fine gentleman,” said Defino of Hammond. On many occasions Defino’s orders were to assist Hammond in the field as he inspected, safeguarded and repaired Italian churches and monuments of cultural significance. Once, Hammond insisted that the duo visit the ruins of Pompeii. Defino remembered that experience well. “I was 18 years old… Pompeii was like going to Coney Island! It was not something I have ever dreamed of!”

Defino remained involved with the MFAA as an assistant, clerk, and driver until early 1944, when he was ordered to advance with his military unit through mainland Italy. He would later be involved in one of the most infamous Allied assaults of the Italian Campaign at the battle of Monte Cassino. By August 1944, Defino landed in southern France as part of Operation Dragoon, and fought his way into Germany. By May 7, 1945, he had reached Heidelberg, where he learned that the war in Europe was over. Declining a request from his commanding officer to accompany him to the Pacific Theater, Defino returned to the United States to complete his college education. Prior to departing the European Theater, he received the Bronze Star Medal. Defino resumed his college education at Seton College, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. He then had a 32-year career in various administrative positions within divisions of the U.S. Steel Corporation.

In the course of a four hour visit in New York City, Defino recounted stories with his family and their immigration to the United States, one by one.

In the aftermath of World War I and the uncertainties that followed, Defino’s paternal grandfather knew that his sons’ chances for better lives were in the United States. One by one, four of the five Defino brothers traveled to the United States, each landing on Ellis Island, to build a new future. (The youngest brother remained in Italy to care for their parents.) “The routine was simple,” said Defino. “The settled brother would welcome the next brother and take him in until he settled, and then so forth and so on down the line.” Defino’s father was the fourth and final brother to arrive in the United States, welcomed by his older siblings Nick (Monuments Man Defino’s name sake), Ralph, and Otto. The Defino family mostly settled in the Northeast, where much of the family still lives to this day.

Our Work With Students

We welcomed with great surprise news that Robert Edsel’s bestselling book, Saving Italy: The Race to Rescue a Nation’s Treasure from the Nazis (published in Italian under the title Monuments Men: Missione Italia), was the preferred choice for a book contest among high school students in the Italian region of Marche, led by esteemed journalist Piero Dolfes. Congratulations to the students of ITS Raffaello (Urbino) for their victory! We hope that reading the stories of the Monuments Men, especially those of Deane Keller and Fred Hartt, will inspire them to be mindful of the great artistic heritage of their country and work hard to preserve it for future generations. Ars longa, vita brevis.
MONUMENTS WOMAN TURNS 100 YEARS YOUNG

We recently celebrated a joyous milestone: the 100th birthday of Monuments Woman Anne Olivier Bell! One of just two living Monuments Women, Olivier currently resides in East Sussex, England. Olivier survived the London Blitzkrieg, working long hours for the Ministry of Information and as an air raid warden. At war’s end, she managed the British Monuments, Fine Arts & Archives operation working out of their headquarters in Bünde, Germany. She skillfully coordinated the day-to-day operations of the British Monuments Men in the field, including the allocation of supplies and the management of transportation to important repositories for looted art. Years later, Olivier had another very successful career as a researcher for her husband Quentin’s book on his aunt, Virginia Woolf. Olivier also had her own literary achievement, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*. Considered the definitive source on Woolf’s life, this five-volume work consumed twenty-five years to complete and earned Olivier an appointment as Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature as well as two honorary doctorates. Today, Olivier works with The Charleston Trust to manage and conserve Charleston, the historic home of Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group.

GERMANY HONORS HARRY ETTLINGER

What joyous news to learn from the German Ambassador that the Federal Republic of Germany wanted to present Monuments Man Harry L. Ettlinger with the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit! This medal is the highest tribute paid to individuals for services to Germany. It recognizes outstanding political, economic, intellectual, and charitable achievements by German citizens as well as foreigners. Harry received the award in honor of his lifelong dedication to “the remembrance and reconciliation of the Holocaust.”

During the September 7, 2016 ceremony held at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., Ambassador Peter Wittig commended Ettlinger for harnessing these experiences for good stating, “You had realized that every individual can have an impact on society- to the better or to the worse. You knew that future crimes against humanity can only be prevented by educating people about the Holocaust and its roots.”

Ettlinger is the fifth Monuments Man to receive the Order of Merit. He now joins a group of deserving men and women, which includes French Monuments Woman Rose Valland, and American Monuments Officers Edgar Breitenbach, Walter I. Farmer, and Charles L. Kuhn. These individuals- as well as the entire MFAA- did extraordinary work to protect Germany’s cultural treasures and jumpstart postwar cultural life in Germany. Please join us in congratulating our deserving friend!
The Foundation has been accepting donations of artifacts related to the Monuments Men story in preparation for various future projects including the permanent exhibit honoring their service at the National World War II Museum's Liberation Pavilion. We have received generous donations of items from numerous Monuments Men and women’s family members. One such donation came from the Ford Family. Lt. Dale V. Ford was a MFAA Specialist Officer in the Württemberg-Baden region of Germany assigned as Officer-in-Charge for the Kochendorf-Heilbronn salt mine. Along with fellow Monuments Man Pvt. Harry Ettlinger, the two were tasked with separating Nazi-looted works of art from those that belonged to German museums that had been placed in the mine for safe keeping.

The Ford Family donation included more than 30 items including uniform components, personal effects, various photographs, military reports and articles, and personal books. One item of particular interest was a book entitled, *Verborgene Schönheit* (*Concealed Beauty*), by Stefan Kruckenhauser. A handwritten message inside the front cover reads:

_This book was taken from Hitler's estate at BERCHTESGADEN on the afternoon of V-E Day. We were located in Salzburg, Austria at the time - but had taken a jeep to BERCHTESGADEN to await official confirmation of V-E Day, thus being able to say that we were standing on the terrace (what was left of it) of Hitler's mountain retreat the minute the war ended in Europe. Also liberated one bottle of good wine with which to offer a few long awaited toasts to Adlif's ill health at evening mess._

_NOTE: This book was taken (looted) with permission of the military unit guarding Estate Records & Buildings._

_D.V.F._

Artifacts personalize the narrative of the incredible men and women who served in the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section of World War II. They are something tangible of the past that provide a more personal connection for those studying the history of these heroes of civilization. The Foundation would like to thank all the individuals who have donated artifacts related to the Monuments Men and women thus far. For those of you who might have objects that you want to see preserved, we believe there can be no better, more appropriate home, than the Monuments Men Foundation archives. Please contact us through info@monumentsmenfoundation.org.
Another Milestone Achievement
Compiling Histories and Raising Awareness

Did you know that the greatest source of information about the Monuments Men is right at your fingertips? Since its inception in 2007, the Foundation has been compiling an online collection of biographies on each of the 345 men and women from fourteen nations who participated in the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section during World War II. We are very excited to announce that we have now written a biography on every single person on that list and posted it online as THE defining reference source on these heroes of civilization. This has been a monumental undertaking requiring the help of volunteers and translators around the world.

The project also includes biographies on each of the members of the Roberts Commission, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Harvard Group, and other exceptional individuals whose leadership either led to the creation of the MFAA operation or furthered its work during and after the war- both stateside and overseas. All told, we have now completed and posted online biographies for 395 individuals!

During the course of our research, we have contacted hundreds of archives in seven different countries and spoken with nearly 100 relatives and friends of the Monuments Men and women. While these short life stories include such general information as education and professional experience, they also reveal that person's personality by including what languages they spoke, the friendships they made during the war, and in some instances even their favorite hobbies and foods. With each biography we write, we're continually reminded about the diversity of this group. Far from being just art historians and curators, their group also included botanists, grocery clerks, secretaries, diplomats, and even a sheepdog breeder, among other professions.

This in depth work had another huge payoff: locating two living Monuments Men that until this time we did not know were alive. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the assistance of each and every family member, archivist, scholar, genealogist, and fan who shared with us various biographies, information and photographs. We would like to extend our deepest to gratitude to everyone who helped us reach this important milestone!

Work still remains however! In addition to the ongoing work to expand our collection of biographies and infill missing information and photos, we are currently working to digitize our research in a searchable database. If you have any information or photographs you think might be helpful, or would like to volunteer your research services in a foreign language, please contact info@monumentsmenfoundation.org.
The Monuments Men Foundation has partnered with In The Footsteps Tours™ and Arts World Travel, a leader in customized luxury travel, on two truly unique and memorable trips that will take place in 2017.

The first trip will be The Monuments Men in Italy tour, which begins in Naples on March 23, 2017, and ends in Milan on April 1, 2017. The second trip, The Monuments Men in Northern Europe, will begin in Paris on October 13, 2017 and end in Salzburg on October 21, 2017. Each tour group will have a maximum size of 20 participants, traveling in 5-Star luxury as you learn about the heroic measures taken by local citizens, art historians, and the Monuments Men to protect our shared cultural heritage.

The founding of In the Footsteps Tours™ is an exciting new venture that will broaden exposure about the Foundation and its work, and will also provide a wonderful opportunity to meet and develop relationships with new prospective supporters. To request more information or to register, please check www.artsworldtravel.com.

In the Footsteps Tours™ also designs special tours for private groups seeking their own travel itineraries and dates. If you or someone you know has an interest, please contact info@inthefootstepstours.com.
In late May the nation’s top museum leaders gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Annual Meeting of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). This year’s theme, “Power, Influence and Responsibility,” promised a lively three-day discussion on the future of American museums. On the final day, Foundation Chairman, Robert M. Edsel, delivered the keynote speech.

“Seize your heritage; don’t shy away from it,” Mr. Edsel urged the 4,000 members in attendance. “Take the lead not out of fear of attack, but motivated instead by a sense of responsibility and pride to complete the mission of the men and women who built the cultural world we have inherited today. Rather than being defensive about Nazi looted art, become advocates for its return. There is joy and honor in returning stolen objects to their rightful owners. This I know: the Monuments Men Foundation has done it many times.”

Mr. Edsel noted that the AAM website made absolutely no mention of its past presidents including the three Monuments Men who served in this capacity. In a call to arms, Mr. Edsel asked the AAM leadership, “How can museums entrusted with objects of the past defend not knowing about their own past?” Mr. Edsel also referenced a speech by Paul J. Sachs, founder of the first museum studies course in the United States at Harvard. Nearly thirty graduates of his course would go on to become Monuments Officers. Sachs also served as the 16th president of the AAM. Speaking at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1954, Sachs reminded all those present of the essential ingredient for success: “Trustees and staff have as a team kept alive the spirit that animated the founders—while moving forward. They have continued to take chances. They have avoided the dangers that dog the footsteps of the complacent…only by ever pioneering boldly and by taking risks will the Museum continue to escape the dangers that go with timidity.”

The Monuments Men and Women faced no less difficult challenges during their time in the military overcoming shortages of supplies, personnel, and transportation. With no tools of technology and little support from the army they still managed to complete their mission. Mr. Edsel used these facts of the past to challenge museum directors of the future to set the example in ambitiously addressing all Nazi-era provenance objects in their collections in a prompt and transparent manner. “It’s past time for museum directors to push beyond budgets, public opinion, and bureaucracy for the good of mankind’s shared cultural heritage.”
URGING CONGRESS TO ACT

On April 19, 2016 Chairman Robert M. Edsel testified before Congress to the Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing Subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee. Other speakers included Mr. Yaya Fanusie, Director of Analysis at the Center on Sanctions and Illicit Finance, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Dr. Patty Gerstenblith, Professor at DePaul University College of Law, Dr. Amr Al-Azm, Associate Professor at Shawnee State University, and Mr. Lawrence Shindell, Chairman of ARIS Title Insurance Corporation.

ISIS is funding its terrorist activities, in part, with revenue from the excavation and sale of looted antiquities. Many ancient works are destroyed in the process. All speakers addressed this problem and the impact on some of the most important cultural areas in Syria and Iraq. But Mr. Edsel used the occasion to broaden the discussion pointing out the recent Panama Papers revelation that a painting by Modigliani, stolen during World War II by the Nazis, had been located in a Geneva Freeport warehouse, where Swiss officials quickly impounded it. The common denominator in these events is the portability of art, which facilitates its use in terrorist activities, to avoid taxation, and to hide works that have been stolen, in particular during World War II.

The world has become far more dangerous as the horrific 2015 events in Paris and Brussels painfully demonstrated, but the way the art world functions is a relic of times past—and that must change.

COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES TO PRESERVE HISTORY AND BEAUTY

A very important part of our work is nourishing great relationships with international scholars, art experts and authorities. One of these resulted in the Foundation’s Senior Researcher, Anna Bottinelli, being invited by the former Superintendent and Director of the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, Dr. Sandrina Bandera, and Dr. Elena Maria Menotti, to consult on the creation of an exhibition titled “Preserving Memory: Beauty, Art and History”, which took place in the northern town of Mantua, Italy in June, 2016.

The exhibition showcased all of the different causes that endanger our shared cultural heritage, from earthquakes to wars; from floods to terrorism. It also focused attention on preventative preservation efforts and the challenges of reconstruction. Storyboards and compelling images provided visitors with a positive message about art and history and the importance of preserving the collective creative memory of civilization.
Help Us Complete the Mission of the Monuments Men

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

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

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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.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that a sculpture by one of the Monuments Men is in St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City?

In 1975, Monuments Man and acclaimed artist Frederick C. Shrady (1907-1990) received a commission for the side altar dedicated to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American-born saint. Crafted in bronze with a corresponding background, the figure’s striking verdigris and modern style capture the attention of the cathedral’s millions of annual visitors.

Just seven years later, Shrady became the first American artist commissioned by a pope. To learn more about this and Shrady’s other accomplishments, read our short biography online at www.monumentsmenfoundation.org.

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