



## Monuments Men Foundation Announces Two Major Gifts



*Mr. Aubrey McLendon.*

The Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art has received major gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey K. McClendon and Chesapeake Energy Corporation totaling \$250,000. Aubrey K. McClendon is the Chief Executive Officer of Chesapeake Energy, the nation's third largest producer of natural gas and its most active driller of new natural gas wells. Robert M. Edsel, founder and President of the Monuments Men Foundation said, "Aubrey and Katie embrace our effort to recognize the Monuments Men and women who saved so much of our civilization's cultural heritage during World War II. The Monuments Men Foundation is deeply appreciative of their generosity and shared vision for preserving and utilizing this rich legacy to the fullest extent possible." Mr. McClendon commented that "Robert's passion for telling the story of the Monuments Men and his vision for utilizing their incredible legacy are great examples of the power of combining philanthropy with business experience. I think his documentary film, *The Rape of Europa*, is an incredibly powerful teaching tool to help everyone understand the importance of protecting cultural treasures during armed conflict. We are pleased to be able to support Robert's ongoing efforts and the work of the Monuments Men Foundation."

### *From the Desk of Robert M. Edsel*

My father died in January. We are sad about losing him, but so grateful to have had him with us for so many wonderful years. A veteran of World War II who served as a Marine in the Pacific, his loss is another reminder of the rapid pace at which we're losing members of the "Greatest Generation."

In the December issue of the newsletter, I outlined our goals for this new year: expanding board leadership, funding, and doubling the number of biographies compiled on the Monuments Men and women. Our focus in January (and the reason we did not publish a January issue of the newsletter) was getting the Monuments Men Foundation firmly established. In late December, the Foundation received its IRS approval letter confirming its 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status. The path to obtain such status is rigorous. We are proud to have completed this important step.

Even before our 501(c)(3) status was known, my friend (and former competitor) Aubrey McClendon, and his wife Katie, embraced our efforts to put to use the legacy of the Monuments Men. Their early and sizable commitment to help fund the Foundation's work speaks volumes about the importance of this project. I'm eternally grateful for their support and that of Chesapeake Energy.

The Monuments Men Foundation was created by Mr. Edsel, author of *Rescuing Da Vinci*, and co-producer of the documentary film, *The Rape of Europa*, to raise public awareness of the 345 or so men and women from thirteen nations, many of whom were museum directors, curators, and educators, who protected monuments and other cultural treasures from the destruction of World War II. By 1945, these heroes of civilization tracked, located and later returned more than 5 million artistic and cultural items stolen by Hitler and the Nazis. The Found-



dation intends for their rich legacy to serve as a beacon for the preservation of such treasures in future armed conflict and to finish the task of locating and returning some of the hundreds of thousands of stolen and missing works of art and documents to the victims of the greatest theft in history.

The Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art was one of ten recipients of the 2007 National Humanities Medal, an honor that was presented by President George W. Bush and First Lady Laura Bush during a White House ceremony on November 15, 2007. Inaugurated in 1997, the National Humanities Medal is the nation's highest honor given for excellence in the humanities field, recognizing individuals and groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities, broadened citizens' engagement with the humanities, or helped preserve and expand Americans' access to important resources in the humanities.

## Holiday Reception at Sotheby's

*by Robert M. Edsel*

Some of my happiest moments have been spent with the Monuments Men and their children. On several occasions I have also had the chance to meet the grandchildren of Monuments Men, most recently Sarah and James J. Rorimer, Jr., granddaughter and grandson of Monuments Officer James Rorimer. This was a special occasion for me as I know both their father and aunt. I experienced this situation frequently during 2007 in conjunction with many of our events, such as the Senate Ceremony honoring the Monuments Men. It was a pleasure introducing family members to one another. Sometimes, friendships have blossomed. The children or grandchildren are usually eager to know more about their father or grandfather and his respective role in the Monuments Men group. I, on the other hand, always welcome the chance to learn more about them and their families.

On December 18th, I hosted a small "thank you" holiday celebration, at Sotheby's in New York City, to express my appreciation to all those people in the incredible city of New York who helped us during 2007. It was a joyous evening that began with the news that the *Magna Carta* had been purchased just minutes earlier by an American, Mr. David Rubenstein, who intended on returning it to the National Archives for view by the public. Two Monuments Men attended: Colonel Seymour Pomrenze, and



*From left to right, Dorothy Kaban, Monuments Man Harry Ettlinger, Sarah Rorimer, James Rorimer, Jr., Ann Faison and her husband Sandy, son of Monuments Man S. Lane Faison, Jr.*  
(Robert M. Edsel Collection)

Harry Ettlinger. Also in attendance was Sandy Faison, one of the four sons of Monuments Man S. Lane Faison, Jr., a legendary figure in art and education, and a member of the OSS.

During his service in Germany, Harry was taken under the wing of Monuments Officer James Rorimer. Sandy's father also worked closely with Rorimer once he arrived in Germany to begin his in depth investigations of the looting by Hitler and the Nazis. To have had the opportunity to introduce Sarah and James to both Harry and Sandy was a sublime moment for me. The Monuments Men circle continues to expand.



## Monuments Men Foundation for the Preservation of Art: In Business, Making Progress!

The Monuments Men Foundation is a not-for-profit IRS approved 501(c)(3) entity created to raise public awareness of the 345 or so men and women from thirteen nations who protected monuments and other cultural treasures from the destruction of World War II. These heroes of civilization subsequently tracked, located and restituted to the victims of the greatest theft in history more than 5 million artistic and cultural items stolen by Hitler and the Nazis.

The Foundation exists to preserve the rich legacy of the Monuments Men by putting to use the lessons learned about the protection of cultural treasures during armed conflict.

**The protection of cultural treasures wins over the hearts and minds of indigenous people which in turn saves lives.** The Monuments Men Foundation also carries on the work of the Monuments Men by locating and returning some of the hundreds of thousands of still missing works of art and documents worth billions of dollars. It is a continuation of the world's greatest treasure hunt.

2007 saw tangible results in both areas of the Foundation's mission. On June 6th, the Foundation hosted an event at the Russell Senate Building in conjunction with the passage of Congressional Resolutions which for the first time recognized the role of the Monuments Men and women during World War II. The Foundation also participated in the discovery and subsequent donation of the "Hitler Albums" to the National Archives. The importance of its work and ongoing mission was recognized on November 15th when the Monuments Men Foundation received the National Humanities Medal from President Bush, our nation's highest honor for work in the humanities.

While 2007 was an extraordinary year by any measure, it merely touched upon the ambitious objectives that will require years to truly fulfill. The small but focused team of the Foundation relies on public and private financial support to underwrite the costs of its future activities and success. Your support is essential. To learn more about the Foundation, or to become a part of the success of this unique Foundation, please visit the Foundation's website or contact its President, Mr. Robert M. Edsel, directly at [rmedsel@monumentsmenfoundation.org](mailto:rmedsel@monumentsmenfoundation.org).



*Monuments Officer Lt. James Rorimer (with notepad), future Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and three GIs remove looted paintings from the castle at Neuschwanstein.*  
(National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD)







## The National Museum of Iraq

*by Robert M. Edsel*



People regularly ask me about the looting of the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad and how it all went so terribly wrong. In fact, I speak often about what didn't happen in Iraq and how knowledge of the legacy left us by the Monuments Men more than 62 years ago could have saved the lives of some of our brave servicemen and women in Iraq. We have a lot to learn from those events if we are to do better next time – and, sadly there's always a “next time” – and if we ever realistically hope to improve our standing in the eyes of other cultures of the world.

The facts: after the U.S. led invasion in Iraq in 2003, thieves stole an estimated 15,000 items from the museum prior to the return of the museum staff on April 12, 2003. Initial reports estimated that more than 170,000 items had been stolen. Those reports proved to be wrong. Still, the value of the items stolen, including more than 5,000 cylinder rings, ivories, and other ancient relics was immeasurable.

Since that time, coalition forces, initially at the direction of Col. Matthew Bogdanos, have recovered about 4,000 missing items. The search for those items still missing continues. The tragic aspect from

my perspective is our failure as a nation to utilize the legacy of the Monuments Men. When I met with Col. Bogdanos last year, he told me he'd never heard of the Monuments Men or the MFAA section. This underscored for me the need to preserve and teach the history of the Monuments Men and gave rise to my founding of the Monuments Men Foundation.

Today however, the news is not all bad despite what you may read or hear. There are some encouraging signs that we are learning how to do a better job in helping others during this enormously difficult period in Iraq. Let me share just one of them with you.

Sometime in 2008 the National Museum of Iraq will likely reopen to the public after having been closed for 5 years. Two ground floor rooms – containing the Assyrian and Islamic antiquities, respectively – will be the first to receive visitors wanting to see the irreplaceable artifacts of this most ancient of civilizations. Much to the credit and honor of Italy, the Italian Ministry of Culture funded payment to Iraqi contractors and assisted them with the renovations and refurbishment of these two rooms. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Kenneth Crawford, and State Department official Diane Siebrandt, have visited the museum often and have ensured that U.S. troops provided protection.

We no doubt will be debating what should and could have happened in Iraq for many years to come. Such debate among people of good will is healthy and can lead to improvements in our handling of the protection of cultural treasures during armed conflict. But for a moment, I want to focus on the fact that some lessons may have already been learned – painful and costly as that learning process has been. Good news does not abound, but there is a glimmering hope as a result of some very hard work by a dedicated group of people. We should pause for a moment to take note of that accomplishment and to credit those who have made it possible.



## Monuments Man Lt. Cdr. James J. Rorimer (1905-1966)



*Lt. Cdr. James J. Rorimer, left, with an unknown GI, examines stolen property of the Rothschild family at the Castle Neuschwanstein in Bavaria.*  
(National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.)

After joining the army as a private in the infantry in 1943, Rorimer was selected at the recommendation of his Harvard professor Paul Sachs to become one of the first Monuments Men on the ground in Normandy. He was then stationed with the Seine Section in Paris, and eventually joined the 7th Army in Germany during the spring of 1945. He was an instrumental figure in leading the effort to locate and reconstitute displaced works of art. In this capacity, Rorimer helped discover some of the greatest repositories of hidden treasures, including the castle Neuschwanstein which housed ERR loot from France, and the Heilbronn mines that contained

art evacuated from German museums. He also played an important role in the establishment of the Munich Collecting Point, which served as the primary facility for receiving, processing, caring for, and restituting thousands of artworks after the war. For his service, Rorimer was awarded the Bronze Star, the Belgian Croix de Guerre, the French Legion of Honor, and the Cross of the Commander of the Order of Denmark.

Upon graduating cum laude from Harvard in 1927, where he was a student in Paul Sachs' distinguished museum course, Rorimer joined the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He was named Assistant Curator in 1929 and Associate Curator in 1932. Rorimer was largely responsible for developing the Metropolitan's medieval collections housed in the Cloisters. He began planning this new medieval extension in 1930, becoming Curator of Medieval Art in 1934 and Curator of the Cloisters upon its opening in 1938. A forward-thinking man, Rorimer was one of the early proponents of using radiography to examine artworks; in 1931 he published *Ultraviolet Rays and Their Use in the Examination of Works of Art*.

Following the war, Rorimer returned to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and was promoted to the position of Director of the Cloisters in 1949. He then succeeded Francis Henry Taylor as Director of the museum in 1955, serving until he unexpectedly passed away from a heart attack in 1966.

During his tenure, Rorimer was a remarkably successful fundraiser and museum developer. He helped develop the Watson Library into one of the largest art libraries in the U.S., and also increased museum attendance from 2 million to 6 million visitors annually. Rorimer amassed millions of dollars in donations which he used to acquire some of the most famous artworks in the Metropolitan's collection, such as *Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer* by Rembrandt and the *Annunciation*, or *Merode Altarpiece*, by the Early Netherlandish master Robert Campin.

Unfortunately I did not have a chance to meet Jim Rorimer. It has, however, been my great fortune to get to know his daughter Anne and son Louis, recently his two grandchildren Sarah and James, Jr., and several of his close friends.



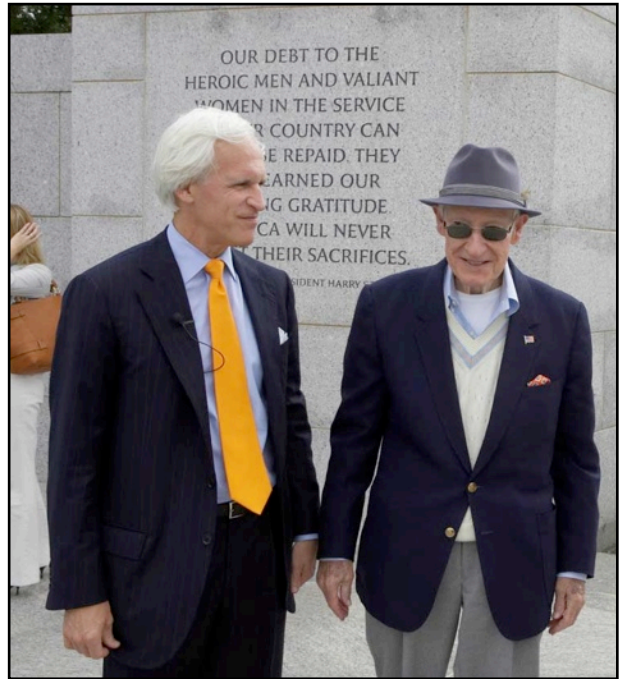


## A Personal Memorial:

### A. Ray Edsel

My father, A. Ray Edsel, died January 19th, 2008. We had him with us for 81 wonderful years during which he touched thousands of lives with his positive attitude and good sense of humor.

After a battle of wills during my adolescent years, things between us calmed. We seemed to find common ground in our mutual interest in business, especially once my career in the oil and gas exploration business commenced. Dad always dreamed of being in that business, but much as he loved it, it was a close second to his affection for the stock market. Still, he lived through the experiences of my oil and gas company and the many sagas that my gifted brother, Jim, and I always seemed to encounter – and overcome.



*Arriving at the World War II Memorial, June 2007*  
(Robert M. Edsel Collection)



*A. Ray Edsel, in navy blazer, with Monuments Men Bernard Taper, Harry Ettlinger, and Horace Apgar at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D. C.*  
(Robert M. Edsel Collection)

The personal crises that regularly find us as we enter our thirties not surprisingly caused a strain between us. We each had strong beliefs in how matters of such an intimate nature should be handled. Still, with the passage of time those conflicts didn't last long nor did they linger. Rather, a friendship evolved that allowed mutual respect. I admired his simple manner, his great attitude, his amazing sense of humor and perspective. It took me years of experiences to understand the achievement of those resilient qualities he possessed and honed. He admired my accomplishments at every milestone, none more so than those of the past seven years. But he equally cherished Jim's business success and his remarkable family, and my sister Anne's role as a wife and mom.

The events of 2007, however, rose above all others and put us both in a wonderful place, so often together to savor the moment. None stands more meaningful than our trip to Washington for the Senate Ceremony to honor the Monuments Men on June 6th. The day before, we arranged for several buses to take our group of Monuments Men and their families to the World War II Memorial, a site Dad had not visited or seen. Because the trip involved a lot of walking, we were able to persuade Dad to use a wheelchair. Even though it was warm and humid as you would expect in Washington that time of year, Dad wore his fedora and a cashmere jacket due to his perpetual battle with feeling cold as



*Sergeant A. Ray Edsel, USMC*

his right and called out each place...Coral Sea, Midway, Guadalcanal, and so on...until the wheelchair was next to the names of the places where he landed and fought...Saipan, Okinawa, Japan. Then came the stories...stories of destruction, death, horror and good fortune...that a simple man, born of few means, survived the greatest war in history and went on to lead a bountiful and rich life. It was a powerful and moving experience.

Other awards and events followed in 2007, but each occurred coincident with Dad's increasing immobility, so he enjoyed those moments vicariously through my mother. And that was somehow fine with me because I knew that I had him with me for the one moment in time that meant the most to him...and to me. It was perfect.

So the circle of life does what it does, and we are all sad to know that Dad isn't here to amuse us, lift us up, make us wonder how he was always so positive and resilient no matter how bad things at the time seemed...and yet we are so grateful to have known this loving man who always had a kind and funny word for anyone and everyone, who loved life more than anyone we have known. All those who met him much less knew him are better for the experience. Can there be a more meaningful definition of success?

his illnesses progressed. It made for a very stylish statement, however, this kind looking man filled with enthusiasm, experiencing this place of honor while being wheeled around the Memorial on a beautiful, sunny, summer day. It was a great day for me...almost a "Field of Dreams" experience, to be at the World War II Memorial with three Monuments Men and my father. But it was also a "work day" - a phrase Dad so wisely drilled into all of us - so I also had to make sure everyone was taken care of while conducting a newspaper interview and filming the whole scene including interviews of the Monuments Men.

As we were finishing, almost two hours into our visit, it occurred to me that inasmuch as I had the camera crew with me, I should interview Dad about his experience as a Marine in the Pacific. I pushed his chair south towards the Pacific side of the Memorial. On both the Pacific and Atlantic sides of the Memorial, there are water basins with the names of the major battles fought in each respective theater inscribed atop the low retaining wall. My Dad fought in many of them. As I pulled his chair backwards, with the camera crew in front of us filming him, he looked to



*Horace Apgar, A. Ray Edsel, Robert Edsel, Senator John Warner, Bernard Taper, and James Reeds (front) in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Building after the June 6th Ceremony.  
(Robert M. Edsel Collection)*



## Florida Atlantic University Lecture

*January 10, 2008*



(Robert M. Edsel Collection)

More than 400 people attended Robert Edsel's lecture at the beautiful Elinor Bernon Resenthal Lifelong Learning Complex on the MacArthur Campus in Jupiter, Florida. Rene Friedman and her able team did a great job in preparing the audience for what was a very special evening discussing the Monuments Men and *The Rape of Europa*.

The Lifelong Learning Center at FAU celebrated its tenth year with Mr. Edsel's presentation. What a remarkable ten years it has been as they have built from nothing an excellent facility that in a short time has grown to include more than 6,000 students and over 11,000 class registrations!

## The Writers Guild of America honors *The Rape of Europa*

*The Rape of Europa* was one of five films nominated for the "Best Documentary Film Screenplay" category by the Writers Guild of America. Although the film didn't win the award, being nominated is still a remarkable achievement. Congratulations to the Actual Films team, in particular Richard Berge, for this great honor.

## Behind the Scenes: "Angels"

*by Robert M. Edsel*

Many people have helped us in the telling of this great story and each of its component parts. Our success is the sum total of those acts of generosity, expressions of good will, and shared determination to make this story known to all. Too often these essential "angels" are not seen by the public, yet they are no less deserving of praise. In each issue I intend on mentioning the names of some of our "angels." Each knows what they've done to help us. To all of them, mentioned or not, we say "thank you." The Monuments Men and their families are eternally appreciative.

This month we would like to thank:

Steve Glauber, Rita Braver, Remington Korper, Catherine Knowles, Rick Steves, Tim Tattan, Melik Kaylan, Eric Gibson, George Wachter, and Talia Katz.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**Yale University,**

Ritchie Lecture Series April 17, 2008

**McNay Art Museum**

May 1, 2008

#### PRINT ARTICLES

**American Airlines Magazine**

March 15, 2008

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