



Status Report: House Resolution 48

After several meetings in Washington, D.C. this past week, the strategy for passage of House Resolution 48 (HR 48) became clear. We want to target passage of this important resolution, which will honor the Monuments Men and women FOR THE FIRST TIME, for June 6, 2007, the 63rd anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy. As some of you may recall, this was a very sore subject with me last year: the *New York Times*, *Dallas Morning News*, and many other newspapers across the country made absolutely no mention of it being the 62nd anniversary of the greatest amphibious landing in history and the formal beginning of the end of the war for Nazi Germany. I considered it then, and now, to be an outrage that these news organizations would ignore their public duty to recognize this date and the heroism that resulted in the deaths of 9,387 Americans during the effort to establish that initial foothold in Europe. As such, it seems a fitting tribute to the Monuments Men, and all Americans who fought in World War II, to create a very different day of celebration this June 6th by passing this Resolution in the House, and I hope the Senate, too.

House Resolution 48 is sponsored by Congresswomen Kay Granger of Fort Worth and Louise Slaughter of New York. We currently have 8 other Congressmen and women formally committed to support the Resolution.



This photo was taken in Congresswoman Kay Granger's office. Shown from left to right are: Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen, Monuments Man Harry Eitlinger, Kay Granger, and Robert Edsel

Congresswoman Granger has informed me that she wants to have the support of at least 200 members of Congress before submitting it for vote. This makes perfectly good sense to me. The process of adding names to our list of congressional supporters is easy: we merely ask any member of Congress to support this Resolution by calling or emailing Catherine Knowles in Congresswoman Granger's office to request that their name be added to the list. She will then handle the internal procedure. It is that simple.

Please: 64 years have passed since the creation of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) section which resulted in the unprecedented work of the Monuments Men and women. They have never been recognized by this country for their extraordinary work during and after World War II. Our



world continues to benefit from their service without ever having formally said, "Thank You." That is not right. Help us; join us in honoring these men and women while there are still 13 living Monuments Men and women able to receive their long overdue recognition.

You can help by contacting the member of Congress in your district, or any member of Congress you may know, and urge them to

support HOUSE RESOLUTION 48 which recognizes the Monuments Men by notifying Congresswoman Granger's office of their support. We need everyone's help. Having spent time with all the living Monuments Men and women and so many of their family members, I can't possibly express in words how much passage of this Resolution will mean to them. I urge you to ACT NOW. Thanks to all!!!

Eisenhower Institute Lecture

February 26, Washington, D.C.



Robert with Susan Eisenhower

Last week I spoke at the Army-Navy Club as a guest of The Eisenhower Institute. What a wonderful experience! An even greater honor was having dinner with Susan Eisenhower, granddaughter of President Eisenhower, following the event. It was an extraordinary evening of conversation and

sharing of ideas about how to further the telling of the story of the Monuments Men. Once again, I was speaking to an audience who knew almost nothing about the Monuments Men and the incredible work they did. The audience of about 200 people was a highly literate World War II crowd which included several retired generals, members of the intelligence community and the O.S.S. Society, and a couple of people from the State Department. Simply put, all were astonished to learn

about this untold story. Frankly, I was surprised that the role of the Monuments Men was so unknown among this crowd, especially when you consider that the Art Looting Investigation Unit was a part of the O.S.S. My presentation was taped by C-SPAN *Book Notes* for future broadcast.



Robert with Dan DeNicola



Gettysburg College and Eisenhower Farms



I was overwhelmed with both pride and sorrow.

My host, Mr. Dan DeNicola, Vice-President of Program Development at the Eisenhower Institute and a noted scholar himself, was kind enough to join me for a private tour of Eisenhower

Farms, purchased by Ike and Mamie in 1950. As Mamie would later say, "We had only one home - our farm."

The story of Hitler and Nazi's theft and the role of the Monuments Men in finding and returning so many stolen items has so many tentacles that it continues to unfold today. During our tour of their home we studied a variety of collectables that were on display in a glass vitrine in their formal living room. In the case was a miniature version of the *Ghent Altarpiece* with a small card beneath it indicating it was a gift to President Eisenhower in 1958 from

Leopold III, former King of Belgium. Any follower of our story knows that the discovery of the *Ghent Altarpiece* in the Austrian salt mines at Alt Aussee was a major event in the history of the MFAA. Less known may be this: General Eisenhower was determined that the iconic works of art stolen from countries of the Allied forces should be returned as soon as possible. The *Ghent Altarpiece* was the very first such restitution. No doubt, the miniature version in the glass vitrine was given as a show of appreciation by the people of Belgium.

After a wonderful event at the Eisenhower Institute, I had the pleasure of speaking at Gettysburg College the following evening to about 200 students, faculty members, and guests. Once again, the audience was very enthusiastic to learn about the Monuments Men.

During the day I spent about four hours touring the Gettysburg battlefield and monuments which was a dream come true. It reminded me in some ways of my visits to the American cemetery in Normandy, yet there was a distinctly different feeling knowing that the combatants of both sides were Americans.



The Ghent Altarpiece

Help Wanted

If you are able to identify any unnamed soldiers in photographs in *Rescuing Da Vinci*, please let us know! For example, we still have not identified the GIs accompanying Polish Monuments Officer Karol Estreicher (holding the Da Vinci painting) and American Monuments Officer Frank Albright (to his left) as seen in the photograph on the cover of the book. Also, we are looking for someone who can help us translate the multitude of German documents and several books we have in our library. Please contact Elizabeth Ivy at (214) 219-1222, ext 104, if you can either help with identifications, or know someone who may be interested in helping with our German translations.





Film News

On February 25th, over 220 people attended *The Rape of Europa* screening at the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. The film was subsequently shown at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., on March 4th. Bruce Cole, Chairman of The National Endowment for the Humanities, introduced the film to an audience of over 550 people, certainly the largest crowd so far! It will next be shown at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where it will be making its premiere in high definition, 35mm film. *The Rape of Europa* will be released in theaters across the country in late spring which should make it much easier for everyone to see it.

Media and Press Developments

We have begun to reach a much broader audience in the past few weeks, as our story has been discussed on national television programs. Last week, I was a guest on *The Charlie Rose Show* on PBS. Thousands of viewers got the chance to see photos included in *Rescuing Da Vinci*, as well as three clips from *The Rape of Europa*, and also hear stories about the MFAA. The interview can be seen on the following link: http://video.google.com/robert_edsel_and_charlie_rose. I was also featured on *The Paula Zahn Show* on CNN in a story entitled "Life After Work" which can be seen at CNN.com. There will be numerous rebroadcasts of this segment. My lecture from the Eisenhower Institute event will be shown on C-SPAN's *Book Notes* program at 8 pm on March 18. Also, look for an interview I had with ABC correspondent Bill Blakemore for the program ABC News Now on ABC's website.

Rescuing Da Vinci Online

For those of you who are not aware, we have a wonderful companion website for the book, www.rescuingdavinci.com. On our site you will find photos, stories, and biographies of the Monuments Men. The film also has a website, www.therapeofeuropa.com, which includes video clips, timelines, and information on recent restitution cases. Additionally, I regularly update my blog at www.robertedselblog.com. All three websites provide a wealth of information on the project!

CALENDAR

- Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival** March 14-25
- Detroit Institute of Art** March 15, 7:30 pm
- Seattle Jewish Film Festival** March 17-25
- Cleveland Intl Film Festival** March 17-18
- Los Angeles County Museum of Art** March 24, 1:30 pm
- Maine Jewish Film Festival** March 25, 1:30 pm
- Oklahoma City Museum of Art** March 25, 2 pm
- New Jersey Jewish Film Festival** March 25, 7 pm
- AFI Festival, Dallas** March 26, 7 pm Magnolia Theater
- Toledo Museum of Art** April 6
- Dayton Jewish Film Festival** April 12-29
- Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, Durham, NC** April 12-15
- River Run Intl Film Festival, Winston-Salem, NC** April 18-23
- San Francisco Intl. Film Festival** April 26-May 10