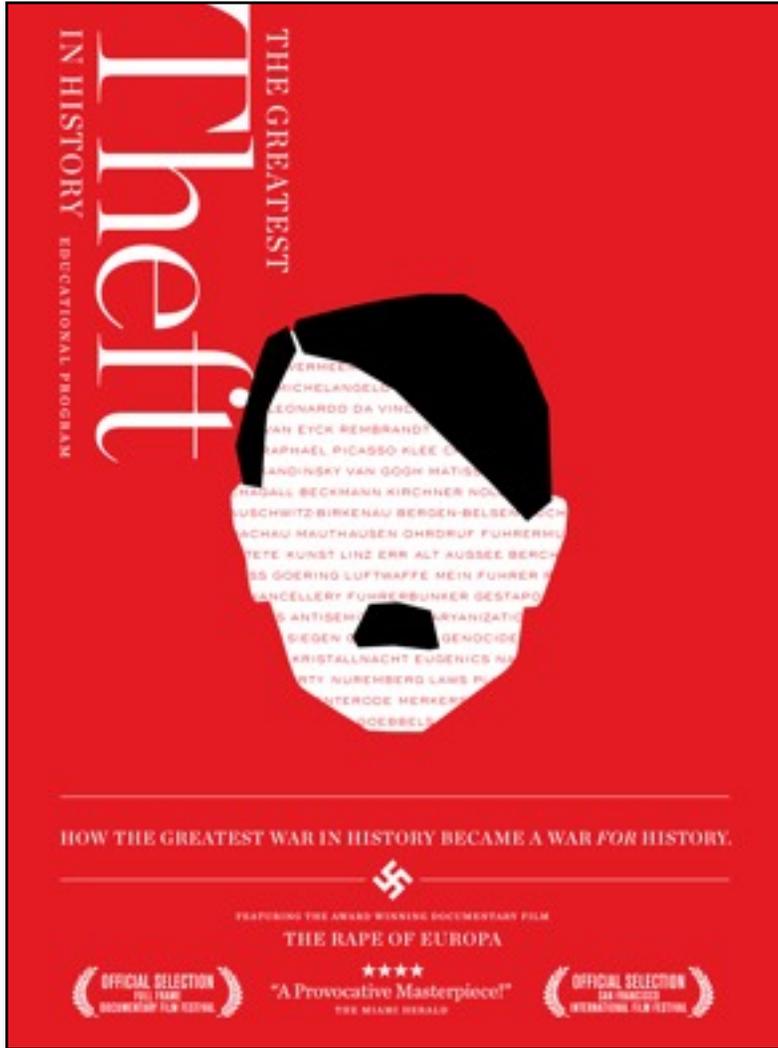




The Greatest Theft in History Educational Program



World War II was not just the most destructive conflict in humanity – it was also The Greatest Theft in History: lives, families, communities, property, culture and heritage were all stolen.

The Greatest Theft in History Educational Program includes a three DVD box set featuring the 2006 award-winning documentary, *The Rape of Europa*, based on the acclaimed book by scholar Lynn Nicholas, seven hours of additional footage and extended interviews, plus a comprehensive website to support teaching and learning across the social sciences and arts curricula. *The Greatest Theft in History* website introduces a set of fully developed lesson plans, which were shaped from an interdisciplinary perspective, and follow national standards. The lessons are organized around topics and themes central to telling the story of *The Greatest Theft in History*, but each lesson can stand on its own to enhance a

From the Desk of Robert M. Edsel

As this year comes to a close it is wise to pause once again to remember the significant events of 2008, a year of historic change and great personal loss.

The poet Kahlil Gibran once observed that joy and sorrow are at opposite ends of the same bed: to embrace one requires surviving the other. Living 51 years with the comfort of a father's presence was a joy; not having him with us ever again an immeasurable loss. There were other losses we felt deeply with the passing of two Monuments Men who, fortunately, lived to know that their great legacy would not be forgotten.

The passage of time contains another reality we oftentimes fight but cannot avoid: change. The dramatic deterioration of our economy has proved “democratic” in its impact on all aspects of our world. Challenging days await us in 2009. At the same time, the election of a person of color to the highest office in our land brings with it a sense of hope not seen in our nation for almost 50 years. We must do more than hope. Shared sacrifice for the common good of our nation, perhaps the most marked characteristic of Americans during the years of World War II, must once again help us build a better and stronger Republic. Perhaps this moment will mark the birth of a new “greatest generation.”



Special Thanks: Dr. Bruce Cole

Our nation has benefitted immeasurably from the steady leadership of Dr. Bruce Cole as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities for almost 8 years making him the most longstanding chairman in the Endowment's history! Normally the departure of such a great and inspirational leader would be a loss to our nation. Certainly, Dr. Cole's successor will have some big shoes to fill. But at the same time, Dr. Cole built a core team of professionals, many of whom will remain behind to ably continue executing the initiatives he developed, such as *Picturing America*. Change is often-times good; hopefully the new leader of the NEH appointed by the incoming administration of President-elect Obama will benefit the Endowment. Now, however, we can only admire the many amazing accomplishments of the outgoing chairman, Bruce Cole.



Dr. Bruce Cole, Robert M. Edsel, and Martha McGeary Snider at a "Picturing America" event in Philadelphia.

Appointed NEH Chairman by President George W. Bush, Cole was confirmed by the Senate in 2001, and reconfirmed in 2005 for a second term. During his tenure, NEH launched innovative humanities programs, including *We the People* and *Picturing America*. Under his leadership, NEH led the application of digital technology to the humanities through its Office of Digital Humanities. The office established innovative new grant programs and formed ground-breaking partnerships with the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation. Cole has also worked to broaden the international reach of NEH.

As NEH Chairman, Cole's highest priority has been to reinvigorate our citizens' knowledge of American history. At NEH, he approved more than 3,000 grants and \$292.7 million dollars in funding for projects about U.S. history and culture, and was responsible for \$759 million dollars in overall grant funding during his tenure. The Endowment's budget also increased during this period.

One of Cole's major initiatives at NEH has been *Picturing America*. Designed to help students understand America's national story through art, *Picturing America* brings great American art into classrooms and libraries nationwide, enabling people of all ages to gain a deeper appreciation of our country's history and character. Through *Picturing America*, schools and public libraries receive forty large, high-quality reproductions of American art, along with resources to help educators use the images to teach American history, literature, civics, and other subjects.

What makes this news so happy was the simultaneous announcement that Dr. Cole was joining the American Revolution Center at Valley Forge as its president and CEO in January 2009. As unbelievable as it may seem, our nation does NOT have a center dedicated to the study of the American Revolution! Bruce Cole has many skills but none greater than a keen awareness of history and how to make it come alive for people of all ages. Congratulations to Dr. Cole and the leadership of the American Revolution Center. And to Dr. Cole, my team says a special word of thanks for the tremendous support our work has received from the National Endowment for the Humanities team.



Monuments Man Sgt. James A. Reeds



*James Reeds during World War II.
(photo courtesy of James Reeds)*

James Reeds began his service with the MFAA under the direction of Lt. Cdr. George Stout in April 1945, as one of the early members of the section. Following the Allied victory, he was stationed at Wiesbaden and at USFET Headquarters in Frankfurt-Hoechst, Germany. Reeds was named the chief clerk for the office, and responded to incoming messages regarding artworks and monuments that had been discovered and then protected or recovered. He was discharged from the U.S. Army as a sergeant and then became a medical supply officer for the military government as a civilian.

Prior to his military service, Reeds was a pre-medical student at the University of Iowa. Because of his knowledge of the German language, he had been sent to the Army Specialized Training Program to become an interpreter. He resumed his college education upon his return home from Germany, and had enough credits to graduate in 1947 with a B.A. in German. He received his M.A. in German in 1949, and later his M.A. in linguistics and a Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Michigan, in 1959 and 1967, respectively.

From 1952 to 1958, Reeds taught at Penn State, and spent the 1956-57 school year as a Fulbright teacher in Detmold, Germany. He worked at the University of Michigan and the University of Detroit while he was studying for his Ph.D. From 1966 to 1969 he taught as an assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Reeds began his long career at the University of Missouri – Kansas City in 1969, and was named Associate Professor Emeritus upon his retirement in 1990. He traveled to Poland in 1984 to teach as a Fulbright Professor at the University of Lodz.



*James Reeds receiving a flag from Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison at the ceremony that marked passage of House and Senate Resolutions honoring the Monuments Men. June 6, 2007.
(photo courtesy of Robert M. Edsel Collection)*

I've spent quite a bit of time with James and his wife, Hedy, whom he met while serving with the MFAA, discussing this remarkable period in their lives. James, humble as ever, downplays his role as a Monuments Man, but in fact the reports he so diligently prepared on looted and displaced art and other cultural treasures were essential elements enabling the successful return of millions of stolen items. His reports continue to be of vital importance to researchers today, a fact he found quite surprising. Hedy, has led no less a remarkable life. As a young Jewish girl in Austria, she was placed on a train one morning by her loving parents who foresaw the coming dangers of the Nazi annexation of Austria. Hedy lived; her parents were victims of the Holocaust. Today James and Hedy live in Kansas City, Missouri.



The Year in Review: 2008



*First Lady Laura Bush and Robert M. Edsel at the White House.
(Photo courtesy of Robert M. Edsel Collection)*

Picturing America at the White House

In February we were invited to the White House as guests of Dr. Bruce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, for the formal introduction of *Picturing America*, a fantastic program designed to place forty iconic images of America and accompanying lesson plans in schools, libraries and community centers to enable teachers to spend more time educating our youth about the cultural heritage of our nation. First Lady Laura Bush was the master of ceremony. At the time of the announcement the NEH had already received more than 20,000 applications from schools and libraries to participate in the program.

Picturing America debuts in Dallas

Dallas was chosen as the first city in the country to formally announce the *Picturing America* program. At a press conference held at the Nasher Sculpture Center, NEH Chairman Dr. Bruce Cole was welcomed by Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert and Dallas Independent School District Superintendent Michael Hinojosa. This innovative program, largely underwritten by the NEH, delivers the teaching materials and forty images to each approved applicant at no cost, an immense help to all schools during these difficult financial times.



*Robert M. Edsel and Dr. Bruce Cole at the Nasher Sculpture Center.
(photo courtesy of Robert M. Edsel Collection)*



*Hermann Goering looking at a globe at the height of his power.
(photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)*

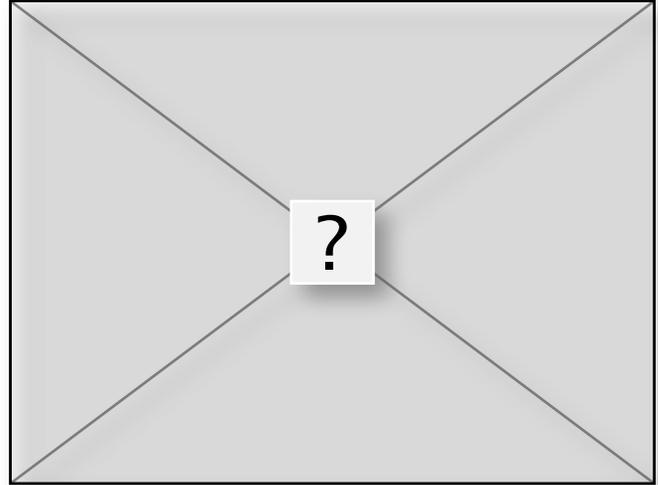
Beyond the Dreams of Avarice: The Hermann Goering Collection.

In October Laurel Publishing announced plans to publish in late Spring 2009 the definitive book on the painting collection of Nazi Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering, written by the distinguished historian and researcher Nancy Yeide. This book is the culmination of eight years of research by Nancy and will be the first such book to contain images and catalogue descriptions showing the provenance of Goering's collection. Was he the great collector he presented himself to be or an epic plunderer without taste?



Dallas Holocaust Museum Hope for Humanity Dinner

On November 9th, the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht, I was honored by the Dallas Holocaust Museum with its Hope for Humanity award. Monuments Man Harry Ettlinger attended the event and introduced me after delivering very touching and personal remarks. This was a special evening with family, friends, and more than 600 other people in attendance made all the more special by the proximity to Veterans' Day.



***The Rape of Europa* on PBS**



More than eight years in the making, our documentary film, *The Rape of Europa*, was broadcast nationally by PBS on Monday, November 24th to an audience estimated to be more than 4 million households. Getting any program broadcast on PBS is an difficult challenge. That we received such a prestigious spot during "sweeps" week speaks volumes about the importance of the film. It is a tremendous achievement for the filmmakers, Actual Films, and of course scholar Lynn Nicholas, author of the book on which the film was based.

The Monuments Men Foundation Receives a Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities!

Dr. Bruce Cole and his gifted team at the NEH, in particular Thomas Phelps, Director of Programs, have been a constant source of support for our ongoing work on the Monuments Men story. Dr. Cole knew several of the Monuments Men quite well, including Frederick Hartt, a great scholar of Renaissance Italy. In late November, the Monuments Men Foundation formally received notice of a \$30,000 Chairman's Grant to fund a teacher's forum about the Monuments Men to be held in 2009 in Dallas. This will enable educators to learn about the Monuments Men and receive teaching materials to use in their classrooms.





Departed Heroes



Lt. Charles Parkhurst
1913-2008



Sherman Lee
1918-2008

Two great men, Monuments Men Charles Parkhurst and Sherman Lee, died this summer. Charles had a distinguished career as a museum director, curator, and art historian which spanned more than fifty years. During those years he worked at the National Gallery of Art, Baltimore Museum of Art, Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, Princeton University Art Museum, and Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College. As a Monuments Man in post-war Germany, his work centered on the restitution of art and cultural objects as well as creating exhibitions to jump-start cultural life in Germany.

Sherman Lee was a renowned expert on Asian art who spent more than thirty years at the Cleveland Museum of Art, including his lengthy service as its director from 1958 to 1983. As a Monuments Man he worked as an advisor to the MFAA in Tokyo after the war, and was responsible for evaluating war damage and promoting exhibitions of Japanese art.

The deaths of both men underscore our race against time to find other living Monuments Men and acknowledge their legacy as soon as possible. Only ten Monuments Men are still with us. Full biographies for all Monuments Men may be found at www.monumentsmenfoundation.org.

ROBERT M. EDSSEL SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

University of North Texas	Denton, Texas	January 26, 2009
Vero Beach Museum	Vero Beach, Florida	February 16, 2009
Women's Institute	Houston, Texas	February 27, 2009
The Webb School	Nashville, Tennessee	April 2, 2009

To subscribe to the *Monuments Men Newsletter*, or to provide us with comments, please contact Elizabeth Ivy: eivy@laurelpublishingllc.com