



“For democracy at least, there always stands beyond the materialism and destructiveness of war the ideals for which it is fought.”

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

What Presidents of the United States have said about our work...

**YOUR MISSION TO GET PROPER
RECOGNITION FOR THE MONUMENTS
MEN IS A NOBLE ONE AND I WISH YOU
WELL.**

PRESIDENT GEORGE H. W. BUSH
(1989 – 1993)

**THE FOUNDATION'S GOOD WORK HELPS
COMMEMORATE THE MONUMENTS
MEN'S EFFORTS TO RESCUE AND
PRESERVE PRICELESS ARTWORKS
DURING WORLD WAR II.**

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
(2001 – 2009)

**THESE MEN RISKED THEIR LIVES TO
PRESERVE OUR WORLD'S CULTURAL
TREASURES. BY TELLING THEIR STORY,
YOU HAVE ENSURED THAT THEIR
DEEDS WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.**

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON
(1993 – 2001)

**PRESERVING THESE STORIES OF
BRAVERY AND SACRIFICE HELPS ENSURE
EXTRAORDINARY MEN AND WOMEN WHO
HAVE SHAPED OUR PRESENT WILL NOT
BE FORGOTTEN.**

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA
(2009 – 2017)



The Monuments Men and Women

ABOUT THE HEROES

The Monuments Men and Women hailed from fourteen nations—museum curators, art historians, architects, even artists—under the organization of American and British operations and were responsible for preserving the artistic and cultural achievements of western civilizations from the destruction of war and theft by the Nazis. Their effort, authorized by President Roosevelt and implemented by historic orders from General Eisenhower, marked the first time an army fought a war while comprehensively attempting to mitigate damage to cultural treasures.

By the time the last Monuments Officers departed Europe, in 1951, they had returned almost four million stolen objects to the countries from which they had been taken. Still, hundreds of thousands of works of art and cultural treasures remain missing.

Generals Bradley, Patton, and Eisenhower review a cache of paintings hidden in the Merkers salt mine, April 1945.

The Monuments Men and Women Foundation

ABOUT US

The Monuments Men and Women Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization created on June 6, 2007 by philanthropist and #1 *NYT* bestselling author, Robert M. Edsel, to honor the legacy of the men and women who served in the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives section, known as the “Monuments Men,” and their unprecedented and heroic work protecting and safeguarding civilization’s most important artistic and cultural treasures.

The Monuments Men and Women Foundation is a recipient of the National Humanities Medal, America’s highest honor for excellence in the humanities field.

President George W. Bush presenting the National Humanities Medal to Chairman Robert M. Edsel alongside Monuments Men James Reeds, Seymour Pomrenze, and Harry Ettlinger at a White House ceremony in 2007.





Building on our Legacy of Accomplishments

In its first decade of operations, the Foundation raised worldwide awareness about the Monuments Men and Women through film, television, and books, honored their military service through the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal—the highest civilian award bestowed by the United States—and preserved their legacy through a partnership with The National World War II Museum by making the Foundation’s incomparable archives and artifacts accessible to students and scholars around the world.

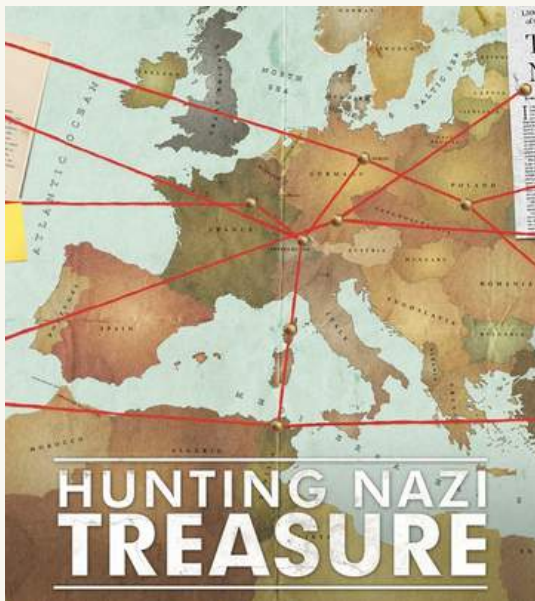
In 2023, The National WWII Museum in New Orleans will open its Liberation Pavilion housing the Monuments Men and Women Gallery.

Speaker of the House, John Boehner, presents the Congressional Gold Medal alongside Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi at a U.S. Capitol ceremony in 2015.



THE MOVIE

Directed by and starring Academy Award® recipient George Clooney, with an award-winning cast, *The Monuments Men* movie was based on the homonymous book by Robert M. Edsel



THE TV SHOW

This exciting series chronicles one of the greatest heists in history and the present-day efforts to locate valuable artworks stolen by the Nazis and return them to the rightful owners.



THE MUSEUM

The Monuments Men and Women Gallery will provide an opportunity for more than 750,000 annual visitors to The National WWII Museum to learn about these heroes of civilization and their wartime service.



Our Mission

RESTITUTION, EDUCATION, PRESERVATION

COMPLETE THE MISSION

The Foundation continues the work of the Monuments Men and Women by locating cultural objects missing since the end of WWII and returning them to their rightful owners.

PREPARE FUTURE LEADERS

The Foundation promotes the appreciation of art and cultural heritage as an essential part of education and develops a variety of programs to reach a broad and varied audience.

RAISE WORLDWIDE AWARENESS

The Foundation plays an active role encouraging institutions and individuals, in the United States and abroad, to place cultural heritage preservation at the forefront of their discussions.

Officers of the 353rd Civil Affairs Command Functional Specialty Team, who had just completed a resource protection training program at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Returning three paintings, taken by an American soldier after the war, to their rightful owner, the Anhalt Art Gallery in Dessau, Germany, June 2015.

COMPLETE THE MISSION

Hundreds of thousands of cultural objects that disappeared during World War II remain missing. To date, the Foundation has located and returned to rightful owners—private collectors, public museums and libraries, and national archives—more than 30 objects, including paintings and drawings, tapestries, rare books, religious objects, and documents. Many of these items are priceless—some, of the highest historical importance.

The Foundation serves all constituencies, from victims of the Holocaust, to veterans, foreign governments, and local museums. Return ceremonies are vitally important to our cause, as they encourage others to come forward. Reuniting people with their lost belongings is at the core of our mission.

The Foundation's "Most Wanted" list of missing works of art and cultural objects constitutes the first cross-border database of wartime property. Its toll free tip line [1-866-WWII-ART, or 1-866-994-4278], the first service of its kind, provides a simple path for those who may be in possession or have knowledge of missing objects to come forward with vital information.



Robert M. Edsel talking to Upper School students at The Seven Hills School in Cincinnati, April 2014.

PREPARE FUTURE LEADERS

Sharing the story of the Monuments Men and Women also includes discussion of essential subjects—the Holocaust, art, religion, and history, to mention a few—that are increasingly ignored by our educational system. It facilitates a fresh and age-appropriate approach of these and other life-skill topics using images and film to speak to people in the language we learn best: visual. To understand the story of these heroes of civilization is to appreciate the power, importance, and fragility of our shared cultural heritage, and at the same time understand how hatred, racism, and ignorance can destroy it.

The Foundation is developing educational programs through strategic partnerships that capitalize on the use of technology and social media. Foundation staff also provide regular online assistance, webinars and workshops, and ad hoc presentations to local schools.



RAISE WORLDWIDE AWARENESS

The Foundation utilized the George Clooney-directed film, which had theatrical runs in more than 100 countries, to draw attention to the importance of protecting our shared cultural heritage. Its work has made the protection of monuments and other cultural property a “fashionable” subject for our youth and many professionals who for years have labored behind the scenes doing work critical to the protection of cultural sites.

The Foundation’s leadership role in raising global visibility influenced the United Kingdom and the United States to reconstitute modern-day Monuments Men units within their armed forces. It also led to an ongoing relationship with U.S. Army Civil Affairs soldiers who continue to be deployed to conflict areas. The Foundation will continue to strengthen these relationships and provide guidance to reserve officers on how to build on the legacy of their wartime predecessors.

The Foundation also continues its work with major policing authorities responsible for enforcing cultural property laws, including the FBI Art Looting team in Washington, D.C. and the Cultural Heritage Protection Unit of the *Carabinieri* (Italian Military Police).

MUSEUM NETWORK

This international network connects the many institutions worldwide that share a connection with the Monuments Men and Women and their work.

CLAIMS DATABASE

A new and growing page on our website dedicated to profiling specific claims of families seeking objects taken away from them/their heir(s) during WWII.

TV SHOW SECOND SEASON

We are in preliminary development of a new TV series that capitalizes on the many leads we continue to receive on missing cultural objects and artworks.



A Few of Our Current Projects



MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Launched in October 2020, this program provides a new way for the Foundation's followers to support the mission and become involved in our activities.

WWII MOST WANTED ART™

We created a deck of playing cards that brings visibility to some of the most important cultural objects and artworks still missing since the end of World War II.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

We are working with the University of Texas in Austin to establish a recurring for-credit internship program for senior students.

**WITH ALL YOUR GREAT SUCCESSES IN
REUNITING OWNERS WITH LOST
POSSESSIONS, THE GREATEST GIFT
YOU GIVE IS HOPE. HOPE TO THOSE
WHO HAVE FOR DECADES BEEN
DENIED, TO THOSE WHO WISH TO
HONOR THEIR ANCESTORS.**

TONY S., USA

**MY CAREER AND MY WHOLE EXISTENCE
HAS BEEN PAVED AND MADE POSSIBLE
BY THESE HEROES. I OWE EVERYTHING
TO THEM. AND I WANTED TO THANK YOU
AND YOUR ORGANIZATION FOR
CONTINUING THEIR RECOGNITION.**

TIM C., UK

**IT MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO KNOW
THAT THE SINS OF THE PAST HAVE NOT
BEEN FORGOTTEN AND THAT THERE
ARE DEDICATED PEOPLE WORKING TO
RIGHT OLD WRONGS.**

KARINA S., ISRAEL

**THERE IS NO OTHER FOUNDATION MORE
TRUSTWORTHY OR CAPABLE OF
PRESERVING ART.**

CHERYL K., USA

**What our supporters
have said about
our work...**

Leadership

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (M 197, W 14)

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CANADA (M 1)

Capt. Munich

JAPAN (M 1)

Takayoshi Yoda



Robert M. Edsel with Monuments Man Harry Ettlinger paying respects to Monuments Man, Captain Walter Huchthausen, one of two Monuments Men killed in action, at the Netherlands American Cemetery. (September 2012)

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