

Solutions for today from the wisdom of the past.



Appreciating the "Greatest Generation"



We recently returned from a vacation in New Orleans, where we spent three full days (until they shut the doors on us) at the World War II Museum. What an immersion in history!

What was originally planned as a museum focused on the D-Day invasion, is now three huge buildings covering the entire scope of the war--Pacific Theater, European Theater, civilian experience, and more. Three additional buildings are under construction, and we can hardly wait to go back. From interactive programs (like taking battle stations in a submarine) to watching 4-D movies, to touching a tank, you are involved in this history.

What was most impressive to us, however, was the museum's commitment to telling the story of the "common" military or civilian participant in this war. The bigger-than-life characters (Patton, Churchill, Eisenhower), while represented here, do not have center stage. Rather, this huge complex allows you to listen to oral histories throughout the museum. There are booths in each gallery

*"I think that people want peace so much that one of these days government had better get out of their way and let them have it."
- Dwight D. Eisenhower*

with comfortable seating and rows of buttons showing names and pictures for you to select and then listen to the stories in their own words. These histories cover key military campaigns, all the military services, the home front experience, Medal of Honor recipients, prisoner-of-war camp survivors. You come away with a new respect for the men and women that Tom Brokaw calls "The Greatest Generation."



Antigoni and Everett pose in front of a WWII tank

And when you tire of walking, looking, and listening, you can eat in a 40s style Soda Shop or watch a show at the Stage Door Canteen. Best of all, you can talk with real veterans, who are stationed at the entrance, ready to answer your questions and share their stories. Treat yourself, if you love history, to a visit to the WWII Museum in New Orleans. Check it out on the Web (<http://www.nationalww2museum.org>) for schedules, directions, and a sampling of those oral histories that we found so moving.

WWII Veterans In Gettysburg



If you're a history buff, you will like this website: www.ww2atgettysburg.com for stories of WW II veterans buried in the Gettysburg national cemetery. This site was compiled as a labor of love by Ralph Siegel, a Licensed Battlefield Guide here in Gettysburg. Last summer, on the anniversary of D-Day, we took Ralph's tour of the Gettysburg cemetery, and we had goose bumps as he related stories of the veterans here. Ralph has gathered details of the men's lives by contacting their families, and he researched their military missions through databases at the National Archives and the National WWII Memorial. We were so impressed by Ralph's tour that we hired him as an instructor at our WWII leadership workshops. Thanks for your passion for history, Ralph.