



## Fall Program to Feature Montgomery County Archaeologist, Jim Sorensen, on Indian and Prehistoric Peoples in Montgomery County



The recent opening of the Museum of the American Indian on the Capitol Mall has sparked new interest in the lives and cultures of North America's populations prior to the arrival of European settlers. Learn more about Indian culture in Montgomery County and the mid-Atlantic region at the fall meeting of the Chevy Chase Historical Society on Thursday, November 18, 2004. Our guest speaker will be Jim Sorensen, who has held the position of Chief Archaeologist for Montgomery County with the Montgomery – National Capital Park and Planning Commission for 16 years. His topic will be "20,000 Years of Montgomery County Prehistory."

The meeting will begin at 8:00 p.m. at the Chevy Chase Village Hall at 5906 Connecticut Avenue. Please join us for what promises to be an enlightening and enjoyable evening.

Dr. Sorensen is a native of Montgomery County who grew up on his grandmother's farm in Hillandale near what is now the new FDA facility between the beltway and White Oak. He was educated in Baltimore until earning his doctorate in anthropology, with a concentration in historical archaeology, at The American University in Washington, D.C. His particular expertise is in the area of pre-European cultures in this region.

For as many as 20,000 years Montgomery County has seen the ebb and flow of numerous prehistoric peoples through its lands. Early hunters of big game such as woolly mammoths gave way to archaic hunting and gathering cultures (8,000 B.C. to 1,000 B.C.). These in turn developed into the agricultural tribal groups that we recognize as the American Indians who greeted the European settlers on our shores. Within the last ten years, scholars have recognized important new theories and ideas in the study of the early populations in what became the United States. Dr. Sorensen will explain the broad and deep cultural roots of our Indian predecessors in the Montgomery County and mid-Atlantic areas.

Dr. Sorensen's presentation will be preceded by a short business meeting. Light refreshments will be served.

# World War II: Chevy Chase Remembers

*Well Attended Program Brought Memories Of World War II to Life*

## Program

More than 200 area residents attended the society's Spring 2004 Program, "World War II: Chevy Chase Remembers." Held at the Chevy Chase Village Hall on May 26, 2004, the program gave the audience the rare opportunity to see and hear a history of World War II through exhibits and the personal accounts of neighbors who are World War II veterans and others with wartime experiences to relate.

The Ken Burns-style production was scripted by Evelyn Gerson, Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Virginia. She wrote the story of the war, weaving into it the accounts of CCHS World War II Project participants, which society volunteers had collected during a year of work on the project.

Most of the reminiscences were accompanied by a photograph of the subject participant, which John Tuohey provided from his collection of photo-posters. Courtney Kane and Evelyn Gerson added many additional photographs of World War II and worked them into the production.

Meir Wolf narrated the story. Readers Ed Rastetter, Mary Sheehan, Jay Treadwell, and John Tuohey gave voice to the veterans' and other participants' memories.

Boy Scout Troop 255 of Chevy Chase Maryland presented the colors. This troop was established in 1940 at the Chevy Chase United Methodist Church. The group lost its first Eagle Scout to World War II.

Karen McManus from Congressman Christopher Van Hollen's office brought greetings and citations from the Congressman for each project participant.

The audience was much moved by the experiences of their neighbors during the war. Great valor was revealed. Hardship and suffering were described. Simply doing as one was told, without complaint, in a routine job to help the war effort also was a common theme. A sampling of the veterans' stories is set forth later in this newsletter, entitled "Chevy Chase Remembers: World War II," pages 5 through 7.

At the conclusion of the program a photograph of the new World War II Memorial was projected on the screen. The veterans stood, and Angela Lancaster, CCHS President, gave a moving acknowledgment of them, thanking them for their bravery and their service to our country.



CCHS banner greets visitors at the Connecticut Ave. Circle

Before and after the program, coffee and doughnuts—the signature USO staple—were served from a USO Canteen constructed for the occasion by John Tuohey. The canteen was wrapped in red, white, and blue crepe paper and was a festive reminder of USO service during the war. (A major USO post located on Old Georgetown Road and Wilson Lane in Bethesda during the war was staffed by many volunteers from Bethesda and Chevy Chase, including Bethesda Chevy Chase High School students. The story of this USO post, available at the society's Archives and Research Center, has been chronicled by Bill Offutt for the Montgomery County Historical Society and is fascinating reading.)

## Program Exhibits

One hundred photo posters produced by John Tuohey circled the meeting rooms. Each participant's wartime photograph was featured, with an excerpt from his or her memories of World War II.

In addition, many participants in the project contributed items that filled one room. These included silk maps, aerial photographs of Pacific Islands, and photographs of Air Force pilots doing their jobs (collected by the late Frederick P. Gilliam, Army Air Force, and shared by his wife Claire). John O'Connor bought a Japanese sword that he was given when he was an occupation soldier in Japan. Ted Bowie brought scrapbooks of the war that were maintained by his mother and his aunt. Bernard Hollander displayed his chronicles of the war, as well as illustrations showing maps captured from the Japanese that detailed the location of channels entering various Pacific islands and the spots in which the Japanese had placed mines.

Peter Haikalis contributed excellent drawings he made of military life during the war. Jim McKay displayed his chronicles of the war as well as his novel on the subject. Ann McLaughlin brought her wartime novel set in Georgetown, *The House on Q Street*, which is available at local bookstores. Other authors who contributed their work were Malcolm Lawrence (*Something Will Come Along*, about his war efforts and foreign service career), and Lila Oliver Asher (*Men I Have Met in Bed*, about her wartime service with the USO, visiting hospitals to

draw portraits of wounded soldiers).

Julie Thomas produced a poster of photographs and memories of children who lived in Chevy Chase during the war. In one account, Tim Gorman reported that he celebrated the end of the war by banging the kitchen pots and pans into almost unusable condition. Jean Linehan remembered having huge canning parties at the high school auditorium to can the produce from Victory Gardens. Another poster produced by Helen Secrest and Susan Elwell showed "clips" that told the story of the war as reported in the county newspapers.

Co-producers Evelyn Gerson and Courtney Kane, masters of the historical documentary, have plenty to smile about.



## Memorial Day Decorations

It stirred hearts to see Chevy Chase Circle, and Connecticut Avenue from the circle to East-West Highway, decorated to salute our veterans. Mary Sheehan took charge of this undertaking. She and committee members Ann Toch and Angela Lancaster overcame stormy weather to put the decorations in place and re-place them following a night of high winds. Permission for the decorating was given by the National Park Service, which now is the custodian of the circle.



Part of the SRO audience at the Village Hall on May 26

## The Project

One of CCHS' missions is to collect the "social history of our neighborhoods." Certainly, the collective memory of World War II is revealing subject matter.

A group of very able society board members and Chevy Chase residents dedicated an enormous amount of time working on it in various capacities. CCHS recognizes and profoundly thanks Susan Elwell (Chair), Mary Ann Tuohey and Julie Thomas (Co-chairs), John Tuohey (graphic designer and computer guru), Ed Rastetter, John Rich, Helen Secrest, George Kinter, and Eleanor Chatfield-Taylor (researchers), and Mary Sheehan, Angela Lancaster, and Ann Toch (decorations).

The project included the five Chevy Chase municipalities. Starting a year ago, the project members advertised in the CCHS Newsletter and in Chevy Chase municipal newsletters. They checked voter rolls for appropriately aged residents. For months they telephoned, sent out questionnaires, performed interviews, and collected and returned photographs.

The project report reveals a wide cross section of experiences. The project members found that much of what happened to an individual was subject to the person's exact age and the luck of the draw. They discovered modesty in the veterans and a reluctance to draw attention to themselves. They believe that readers will find themselves reflecting upon each recollection with wonder.

The outcome of the year-long project was productive by any measure. In addition to the aforementioned program and exhibits, each participant received a photo poster of him or herself and a copy of his or her interview. Each veteran and war worker was registered at the new World War II Memorial and received a copy of the registration document.

*A one hour video tape of the production, courtesy of Montgomery Cable, is available for loan at the CCHS Archives and Research Center, at the Chevy Chase Community Library, 8005 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815*

*All of the participants' reports also are available to readers at the center*

*CCHS has given each municipality a book containing the complete wartime stories of its residents, which is available for circulation in each town*

## Chevy Chase Historical Society Newsletter



Chevy Chase Historical Society  
Post Office Box 15145  
Chevy Chase, MD 20825-5145

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### CCHS Archives and Research Center

Chevy Chase Community Library  
8005 Connecticut Avenue  
Tel: 301-656-6141  
Fax: 301-656-5114

E-mail: chevychasehistory@msn.com  
Open 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on  
Tuesdays and by appointment.

The Chevy Chase Historical Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to discover, record, and preserve the history of the Maryland and Washington neighborhoods known as Chevy Chase.

## Recent Acquisitions

*Recent Acquisitions* is a regular feature in the newsletter, describing documents and other items that are acquired for the society's Archives and Research Center. In recent months, CCHS has added the following material to its Archives and Research Center.

1. A bottle cap from Clean Drinking Farm Dairy. This interesting item is made of cardboard and bears information, "Montgomery County, MD - Tel - Ken 59K." Donated by William Offutt.

2. Photographs of 3911 Blackthorn Street taken between 1952 and 1966. Donated by Don Chapman.

3. A box of photographs taken by Geoffrey Biddle of various Chevy Chase Village gatherings.

4. *Something Will Come Along*, the delightful autobiography of a Chevy Chase resident. Donated by author Malcolm Lawrence.

5. Eight programs from the Chevy Chase Reading Class dating from 1919 to 1930, and a history of the Reading Class. These valuable items are separately stored in our collection of rare materials. Donated by Mrs. Catherine W. Gregg and Mrs. Mary W. Hamilton.

6. Papers and photographs of 6919 Woodside Place, which are part of a new exhibit pertaining to the society's World War II Project. The exhibit is titled, "Eda Schrader Offutt Remembers Woodside Place During World War II." Mrs. Offutt's father, Dr. A. Lee Schrader, was a professor of horticulture at the University of Maryland. Donated by Mrs. Offutt.

7. An old insulator from Chevy Chase Lake. Donated by Thomas Hughes.

8. An oral history of Donald Robertson's uncle, Louis Robertson, who was an early resident and has many interesting memories of Chevy Chase. Donated by Donald Robertson.

9. A file concerning the Bergdorf Tract from the papers of the late Betty Ann Kranke, who was a member of the Montgomery County Council. Donated by Wilson Kranke.



Angela Lancaster at the mike, and Julie Thomas present the WW II Veterans Book to Mier Wolf, Vice Chairman of the Town of Chevy Chase, July 4, 2004.

## Chevy Chase Remembers: World War II

The Chevy Chase Historical Society's World War II Project was an attempt to discover and recognize those residents of the Chevy Chase neighborhoods who served in the military during the war, those who were involved in essential war work, those who lived here during the war, and those living here now but who lived overseas during the conflict. The society held two programs, both open to the public: one focused on life on the home front and the other on the war related experiences of residents. Eighteen members of the society served on the project committee, chaired by Susan Elwell.

We acknowledge that our survey methods, although extensive, may not have reached all of those who served in some way. We regret any omissions and trust that the spirit of our good faith efforts will honor all who were involved in World War II.

There were 102 participants in the WWII Project:

- 45 were in the US Army: 21 officers, 24 enlisted men
- 2 were in the British Army :1 officer, 1 enlisted man
- 31 were in the US Navy: 18 officers, 13 enlisted men
- 5 were in the US Marine Corps: all officers
- 2 were in the US Merchant Marine
- 1 was in the US Coast Guard
- 5 were involved in essential war work
- 7 were residents of Chevy Chase
- 4 were residents during the war but no longer live in the neighborhood
- 1 was a child of the Kindertransport
- 1 was a displaced person who escaped from Austria and lived in Sweden

War areas mentioned by participants in the memoirs given to the society:

In the European Theater, 26 served:

- 12 in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and Italy
- 12 in Belgium, France, Germany, and Austria
- 2 took part in D-Day
- 2 in the Battle of the Bulge
- 1 at Berchtesgaden and 1 at Dachau

In the Pacific Theater, 23 saw action:

- 5 at Okinawa
- 5 at Saipan
- 4 at Guadalcanal
- 2 who served in China, Burma, and India
- 2 at Eniwetok
- 1 at Iwo Jima who saw the famous flag raising
- 1 at Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup>

On the home front, 34 served in the military. They included six women, four of whom were officers.



Phillip F. Eckert  
United States Navy  
Lieutenant Commander  
Pacific Theater 1940-41  
Silver Star, Bronze Star, Presidential Unit Citation  
Five Battle Campaign Stars

After graduating from the US Naval Academy in 1940, I joined the New Mexico in late June 1940 . . . after arduous duty in the Atlantic . . . attended Submarine School . . . then made several successive (and successful) war patrols . . . over a 20 month period saw action in the waters abutting Japan, Alaska, the Gilberts, the Marshalls, the Solomons, the Marianas and Australia . . . return(ing) to the Pacific, made three more successful patrols . . . took command of the GAR (SS-206) at Saipan about three days before atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and then Nagasaki.

### **Eleanor Ford\*** **Resident of Chevy Chase During WWII**

On December 7, 1941, when I heard the announcement of the bombing of Pearl Harbor on our only radio . . . I was 9 ½ years old . . .

My overriding memory of those war years is of the daily, hourly anxiety and uncertainty gripping everyone: The intense attention to news broadcasts and the discussions of their import; the strain of listening for our beloved mailman's whistle announcing a letter from a war zone and the alternating stabs of dread and anticipation roused by the thump of mail on the hall floor, and by the voice of a long distance operator on the telephone, which usually signaled bad news.

*\*No picture available*



John A. Kay Sergeant  
 15th (Scottish) Reconnaissance Division  
 15th (Scottish) Regiment, British Army  
 1940-46  
 Commander in Chief Citation

Sgt. Kay was the “map king” for the 15th (Scottish) Regiment, of the 15th (Scottish) Division. The 15th landed at Normandy shortly after D-Day, fought its way, sometimes through heavy resistance, 1,500 miles through northern France, Belgium, Holland, and northwest Germany, crossing all three great rivers, the Seine, the Rhine, and the Elbe, to Hamburg, where the German army made its initial surrender overture to Allied forces on May 2, 1945, to Brigadier Colville of the 15th.

In the process, Sgt. Kay drove the lead light reconnaissance vehicle for the British army and was wounded in action. Fluent in French, German, and classical Greek, Mr. Kay was later instrumental in assisting the Greek government to receive Marshall Plan assistance for rebuilding after the war.



John Rich  
 United States Marine Corps  
 Second Lieutenant  
 1939-1963  
 U.S.A., Guadalcanal, Marshalls, Saipan, and Tinian  
 Bronze Star, Purple Heart

We were hungry . . . because of the Japanese air attacks . . . We had two meals a day, each equal to half a Japanese ration. One meal consisted of a spoonful of barley and 2 prunes, the other one, a spoonful of barley and half a fish. I did a lot of patrolling. We saw lots of air battles. I caught malaria, as did almost all of the Marines . . . and then [we] went to Saipan and Tinian . . . I served as a squad leader about 10 days after the landing June 12, 1944. I was wounded (shot in the ear) the last day of the Saipan campaign . . .



Carl Anton Ruppert  
 United States Navy  
 Lieutenant Jg  
 1942-1946  
 England and France, D-Day Normandy

After graduation from the University of Notre Dame USNR Midshipman Training School, where he participated in the US Navy V-7 Program for college graduates, Carl Ruppert was commissioned and reported for duty at the Solomons Island Naval Amphibious Base in Maryland. He sailed for England in February 1944. He was Deck Officer on the USS LST-528 that was the first LST to transport ammunition across the Atlantic. During the D-Day invasion his ship delivered 20 tanks, carried on the lower deck, 20 heavy trucks from the upper deck and 300 British veteran troops from North Africa. All landed on Juno Beach, Normandy in the early evening of June 6, 1944.



Robert Jones  
 United States Army, Pfc  
 1943-1945  
 United States, Europe  
 Purple Heart, Bronze Star

December 25, 1944, was bright and clear. The U. S. Army Air Force came overhead and the sky was filled with our planes. Tinsel came down and upset their radar. We thought they were wishing us a Merry Christmas. In Belgium, on December 29, 1944, I was wounded in the neck and sent to a general hospital at Leige where I was operated on on a stretcher between two saw-horses and flown to England for further operations. After rehab I rejoined my Regiment and ended up outside Iserlohn, Germany.



Irving I. Kramer  
United States Army  
First Lieutenant  
1943–1947

France, Germany, Austria, Japan

Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star(2), Purple Heart(2), Army  
Commendation, Rhineland and Central Europe Ribbons,  
Victory Medal, Occupation Medal (Germany, Japan)

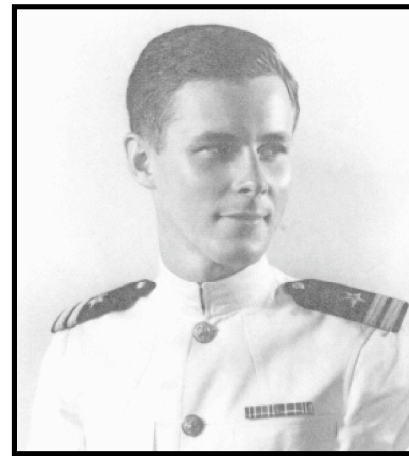
Irving Kramer had several types of war experiences. Conversant in German, he was sent behind enemy lines to learn troop sizes and equipment available to the enemy as the US Army advanced after the Battle of the Bulge.

As a 21 year old, he was given command of and responsibility for all aspects of a displaced persons camp set up in Austria. A total of 5,000 men, women, and children, mostly Yugoslavs from slave labor camps and some Russian soldiers, had to be housed, fed, clothed, and given medical attention. At the same time he commanded a prison for 3,000 German SS Prisoners of War at a nearby location.



Jack L. Estopp  
United States Army 365 Flight Group  
1st Lieutenant  
France, Belgium, and Germany  
Distinguished Flying Cross,  
Air Medal with 10 Oak Leaf Clusters

One time we made a fighter sweep—that's a full group mission of 36 airplanes. We were flying around to see if we could find some Germans, and sure enough we did. Upon encountering the enemy, the procedure was to jettison the 150 gallon external gas tank in order to permit a higher speed. At that time I was flying wing to the Group Leader who had just jettisoned his gas tank. I tried to jettison my tank in order to stay with him and protect him, but the mechanism failed. The leader's plane was soon far ahead of me. Suddenly I spotted two German Focke Wulf 190s following him. As one of them turned to attack, I estimated where the plane would be as it came out of the turn and fired a long burst just ahead of him so that he flew into the fire. His engine was hit and he turned downward at a steep angle emitting a cloud of white smoke. I fired at the second plane, but did not see the outcome. We completed the mission successfully and I received the Distinguished Flying Cross for this action . . . .



James Creighton McKay  
United States Navy  
Executive Officer U.S.S.C 1335 and U.S.S.C. 507  
Commanding Officer U.S.S. P.C. 1596

Upon arrival, we learned that we were to participate in the invasion of Southern France scheduled for August 15, 1944, in the area of St. Tropez. Our specific task was to escort a group of LCIs —135-foot landing craft packed with soldiers of the 45th Division, from Ajaccio, Corsica, and then, on D-Day, to guide them to a point about one mile from the beach. After conducting training exercises on the Salerno beaches, we proceeded on the night of August 14 to carry out our mission.

The invasion was preceded by the heaviest sea and air bombardment on record, even heavier than the one preceding the Normandy Invasion. One of the ships involved was the battleship Nevada, and one of our missions was to circle the Nevada at night to guard against underwater saboteurs.

# SALVAGING THE ALABAMA

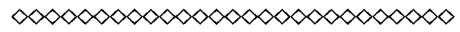
Those of you who read the article in the Spring CCHS Newsletter about the CSS Alabama will be interested in the following e-mail message we received from J. Rodney Little of the Maryland Historical Trust.

“Just read your article on the Alabama and Raphael Semmes. Thought you might be interested in a couple of collateral facts.

“Before the Civil War, Semmes was a notable resident of Charles County, Maryland. The wreck of the Alabama was discovered in the 1980’s and became the subject of an international dispute between the U.S. and France. Both claimed ownership - France because the ship lies in French waters, and the U.S. because she was a “prize of war.” Ultimately the dispute was settled. France agreed to U.S. ownership, in exchange for an agreement that any salvage operations would be conducted by the French Navy (the ship lies in a sensitive area near some French submarine facilities). Excavation and salvage is ongoing. Periodically, artifactual material is shipped from France to the U.S. for conservation and curation. The arduous and highly technical work of conserving the delicate artifacts is being

conducted by the Maryland Archeological Conservation Laboratory (MAC Lab) of the Maryland Historical Trust, under contract with the U.S. Navy. Any persons who would like to see the artifacts (many) under conservation may arrange for a tour by calling the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum at (410) 586-8500.”

Many thanks to Mr. Little for this additional information. Readers may well want to visit the park in the future.



CCHS appreciates all the generous words of thanks from the honorees of its project, “World War II: Chevy Chase Remembers.” Here are a few quotes from letters we received:

*A remarkable show . . . very successful effort on behalf of WWII vets . . . done so well and in very good taste . . . we are honored and pleased . . . could not have been more impressive, moving and uplifting . . . a wonderful job . . . done so professionally . . . brought back memories, some good and some not so good . . . deeply appreciated . . . tremendous amount of effort by many CCHS members . . . excellent tribute . . . outstanding slide presentation . . . well done!*



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