

## World War II programming on WSBE/Rhode Island PBS January & February 2010

Please link to WSBE for more detailed information:  
[http://www.pbs.org/thewar/broadcast\\_schedule.htm](http://www.pbs.org/thewar/broadcast_schedule.htm)

**Sundays at 2:00 pm beginning January 3rd**

### ***The War***

THE WAR, a seven-part documentary series directed and produced by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, explores the history and horror of the Second World War from an American perspective by following the fortunes of so-called ordinary men and women who become caught up in one of the greatest cataclysms in human history. Six years in the making, this epic 15-hour film focuses on the stories of citizens from four geographically distributed American towns — Waterbury, Connecticut; Mobile, Alabama; Sacramento, California; and the tiny farming town of Luverne, Minnesota. These four communities stand in for — and could represent — any town in the United States that went through the war's four devastating years. Individuals from each community take the viewer through their own personal and quite often harrowing journeys into war, painting vivid portraits of how the war dramatically altered their lives and those of their neighbors, as well as the country they helped to save for generations to come.

### **Mondays at 9:00 pm**

*Navy Heroes of Normandy* - January 4th

The one-hour documentary chronicles the building and dedication of the first ever monument in Normandy honoring the United States Navy's role on D-Day. It took more than six-decades for anyone to realize the U.S. Navy was the only branch of the American armed forces not to have a memorial in Normandy. Over 1,000 U.S. navy men died on D-Day and the following three days as the Battle for Normandy began. The film recently made its international debut in Normandy, France during D-Day 65th anniversary ceremonies and at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Kansas. *Navy Heroes of Normandy* features the personal stories of navy veterans who took part in operation Neptune-Overlord on June 6, 1944. The film is a follow-up to Tim Gray Media's Emmy Award winning first film, *D-Day: The Price of Freedom*, released in 2006. Interviews with French residents of Normandy who lived through D-Day, as well as Manfred Rommel, son of the famous German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, are also included in the film. 15 year-old German army soldier Manfred Rommel was home with his father in Germany when the call came in that the Allied invasion of France had begun, and offers a unique perspective on the events of June 6, 1944.

### ***D-Day: The Price of Freedom* – January 11<sup>th</sup>**

D-DAY: THE PRICE OF FREEDOM pays tribute to the courageous men who began the liberation of France more than 60 years ago. Throughout this moving

documentary, former paratroopers, gunners, landing craft operators and others representing the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy share their harrowing tales of survival. Five veterans - some of whom were returning to Normandy for the first time since 1944 - make an emotional journey to the American Cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach, the final resting place of 9,000 of their fallen comrades. There, each speaks candidly about the unimaginable horror, despair and fear of the day. D-DAY: THE PRICE OF FREEDOM also explores why these aging men remain heroes to the French people. During their visit, young and old alike honor their liberators with toasts, ceremonies and other tokens of gratitude.

### ***Men Who Sailed the Liberty Ships – January 18th***

THE MEN WHO SAILED THE LIBERTY SHIPS pays belated homage to the U.S. Merchant Marines, civilians who volunteered for one of the most dangerous jobs of World War II: sailing cargo ships loaded with food, fuel and raw materials to the frontlines. Despite their valiant support of the Allied war effort, veteran merchant seamen waited 45 years before they received official recognition in the form of medals, disability benefits and federal cemetery plots. The documentary, filmed aboard the Jeremiah O'Brien - one of the last unaltered World War II-era Liberty Ships still afloat - intertwines stirring firsthand accounts of war at sea with personal photographs and archival film footage.

### ***Government Girls of WWII – January 25th***

The story of the young women who flocked to Washington, DC during the 1940s to help in the mobilization for WWII and how their experience during the war years changed their lives, the city and American society. Spies, code breakers, strategic analysts, clerks. Young women, nearly a million strong by war's end streamed into Washington filled with patriotism and enthusiasm to aid the World War II homeland effort. They came for reasons of patriotism, excitement and independence. The war opened opportunities for wage earning employment for women that were unheard of before. There were many more opportunities for professional advancement and financial independence than were previously available and the government was actively recruiting women. It was even more of a breakthrough period for African-American women and other women of color. It afforded them a chance many had not had before and large numbers of them jumped at it. Government Girls of WWII is a one-hour documentary. It combines oral histories of the eyewitnesses to the period and interviews with noted humanities scholars who are experts on the role of women in the 20th century. It uses archival film footage, and still photographs most of which have never before been used in television documentaries. Narrated by Cokie Roberts.

### ***Spitfire: Birth of a Legend – February 1st***

SPITFIRE: BIRTH OF A LEGEND tells the story of the fighter plane that won the Battle of Britain and saved that nation in World War II. The brilliant engineer R.J. Mitchell's design for a "killer fighter" encountered opposition and problems in its early days, but the Spitfire went on to earn itself the distinction of becoming the symbol of Britain's determination to defend itself. The story of this legendary

plane is told chronologically as the war progressed and the pressure was on to get the planes manufactured. The design was continually upgraded to meet the demands put on the aircraft during the conflict.

***Fly Boys: Western Pennsylvania's Tuskegee Airmen – February 8th***

This one-hour documentary tells the story of struggle and the ultimate triumph of the brave African-American soldiers who served their country during World War II. The film chronicles the "Tuskegee Airmen" program, a controversial military initiative designed to measure African-Americans' competence for flying the engines of war. This fascinating documentary features the stories of the more than 40 aviators from western Pennsylvania, including the pilots, navigators and bombardiers who flew fighter and bomber planes during the war, as well as the maintenance and support staff, instructors and personnel who kept the planes in the air.