

REMEMBERING WWII: A GEORGIA TRAVELER SPECIAL CAPTION SCRIPT

Music

Frank Hanner VO:

This museum is designed to remember what the soldier has done for our country.

Bud Porter VO:

I don't want anybody to ever forget what we went through in World War II.

Betty Roberts VO:

They knew that they had to fight for something, and I think this is the thing that the museum really brings out.

Music

Woman VO:

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Man VO:

Few places on earth match Georgia for natural beauty, and we plan to keep it that way. We're Georgia Power, a proud sponsor of public broadcasting. We're on, so you can be. Georgia Power, a Southern Company.

Woman VO:

And by supporters of Georgia Public Broadcasting. Thank you.

Music

David:

Hello, and welcome to this special edition of Georgia Traveler, Remembering World War II.

Keely:

In this episode we'll be traveling Georgia visiting museums that commemorate that historic event.

Phil:

We are here at the Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park in Cordele. This site was established in 1946 for the purpose of honoring the many men and women who served during World War II.

Music

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Phil:

One of the keys to victory for the Allied Forces during World War II was the battle over air supremacy. Now one of the air assault groups that was given that task was the Eighth Bomber Command. Also known as the Mighty Eighth.

Music

Walter Brown:

The Mighty Eighth Air Force was at the end of World War II, the world's mightiest air armada.

Bud Porter:

This was the first time that a war was fought in almost stratospheric altitudes.

Edward Robarts:

The Eighth Air Force lost a little over 10 percent. This is killed in action.

Bud Porter:

I don't want anybody to ever forget what we went through in World War II. So this museum is a great vehicle to keep that history alive.

Phil VO:

Just outside Savannah in Pooler, Georgia, the history of World War II is alive at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Walter Brown:

The museum is 90,000 square feet. It honors every bomb group, every fighter group, and particularly all the support units associated with fighting the war.

Music

Walter Brown:

This museum is not an airplane museum. It definitely is not a war museum. We present the story of the people, the men and women of America.

Phil VO:

And many of those men and women volunteer their time at the museum to share the story of their experience.

Paul Grassey:

I was a B-24 pilot. Combat is really a lot of luck to not get hit with something. Either flack, and the way we were flying, machine gun fire, and so on. We had 250,000 that were part of the air crews in the Eighth Air Force.

Bud Porter:

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I was a ball turret gunner on a B-17. There is no better ride than riding in a ball turret. You can't even see your own airplane. You know you're attached to it, but all you could see was the ground and the sky. And really, it's fantastic, until they started to shoot at me.

Phil VO:

Not all stories shared here involve grave danger, but most are about how the experience of war changed lives.

Edward Roberts:

I had a buddy that I was stationed with in the 15th Air Force down in southern Italy. And he was writing to a WAVE. He wrote his girlfriend and says, "I've got a buddy that, he doesn't get much mail. His parents are both dead, and why don't you have some of your girlfriends write him?" About eight of them wrote me, and I answered her letter. And that's how it got started.

Betty Roberts

In December of '44, Ed finished his 35 missions and came home. He asked me to marry him, and I said yes. And the 23rd of June we were married.

Phil VO:

Veterans of the Mighty Eighth can teach others about their experience through a special exhibit called the Mission Experience.

Bud Porter

The first part is right here in this room. This is supposed to be a briefing room, where the crews went in, were briefed on their mission they're about to fly. When this is finished, then they go through this door and see the ground crews getting the planes ready to go, and then when that's finished you go into another room, and you actually fly a mission. I'm talking to a fresh audience every time. My wife is tired of hearing my stories.

Phil VO:

Surely visitors will never tire of hearing the incredible stories of these veterans.

Walter Brown:

We need to present this story and we need to have the younger generations and older generations appreciate what was done by a unified Allied force during World War II against an enemy of the worst kind.

Paul Grassey:

We're plain, vanilla guys who got called and got taught what we had to do to get the job done. And it was a mighty job to get done.

Betty Roberts:

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I want them to understand how the people in America felt about the war. They didn't want their husbands and sons and grandfathers to go over and get killed, but they knew that they had to fight for something. And I think this is the thing that the museum really brings out. This is what they did.

Bud Porter:

I want everybody that leaves this museum to say to themselves, "My God, what a great experience!"

Music

David:

A key element for the Allied Forces' success on D-Day was the mission of the U.S. Paratroopers. And many of these elite soldiers actually trained at Camp Toccoa in northeast Georgia. And the Currahee Military Museum honors all U.S. paratroopers, including those responsible for carrying out the strategic mission.

David VO:

Lt. Reed Pelfrey was the 14th American to step foot in Normandy on D-Day.

Reed Pelfrey:

This aerial photo was taken on June the 6th, and this is Pointe du Hoc. You can see the bomb craters, the shell craters. And many of them are there still today.

David VO:

Pelfrey was a paratrooper of the 101st Airborne, and the Currahee Military Museum in Toccoa, Georgia honors soldiers like him who served their country with bravery and honor.

Reed Pelfrey:

On D-Day, both the 501 and the 506, along with the original TO&E Regiment, the 502, jumped into Normandy. The 101st jumped in this area. The 502, the 501, and the 506. We had planes going in all directions, and it was about 20 square miles that people were dropped.

David VO:

The 506, known as Easy Company, originated here at Camp Toccoa, and have since become the most famous of the paratroopers, featured in movies like *The Dirty Dozen*, and more recently *Saving Private Ryan*, and the 10-part miniseries, *Band of Brothers*.

Reed Pelfrey:

This is a board of Dick Winters, who commanded Easy Company during Normandy.

Brenda Carlan:

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You know, it's a known fact that most soldiers become very close during war. A lot of them will trust a fellow soldier more than they would trust their own brother. So that was kind of how the terminology came up, Band of Brothers.

Reed Pelfrey:

The average trooper, I would say, would be about five-foot-eight. Average weight would be about 140. By the time you got all the equipment on you, especially if it was combat load, they'd go up to maybe 300 pounds.

David VO:

Camp Toccoa at Currahee Mountain was the birthplace of the US paratrooper training program, and the training ground for approximately 17,000 soldiers of the 501st, 506th, 511th, and 517th regiments.

Brenda Carlan:

E Company, 506 was the first regiment to come here in July of 1942. While they were here in Toccoa, they had to go through strenuous, very, very strenuous and tedious and continuous physical activity. Part of it was running up Currahee Mountain, which was three miles up and three miles down.

Reed Pelfrey:

You ran the mountain every morning before breakfast, and if you fouled up during training, you ran it again with full gear.

David VO:

The centerpiece of this museum is a racing horse stable from England, which housed both Able and Easy company prior to and after D-Day.

Brenda Carlan:

And when they left here they were stationed 40 miles west of London in a town or a village called Aubourn. And there were only 700 residents at that time. Well all of the sudden they have about 10,000 soldiers to deal with. And some of them were still required to sleep in tents. So the stables were kind of the Taj Mahal of housing during World War II. And this particular stable that we have here was one that was never torn down over the years, because the owners of it knew who stayed in that stable.

Reed Pelfrey:

These displays here are paraphernalia that was memorabilia that we got out of, or they got out of the stalls when they were disassembling them to bring to the U.S. Don't forget my rats. They're named Able and Easy because those were the two companies that slept in these stalls.

Reed Pelfrey:

Each item in here has a story behind it, and about all we can do is relate the stories behind it. Each year we have a reunion, and men from all of the units

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that trained here, plus veterans in the area, and veterans from other regiments come back.

Brenda Carlan:

They were close then, and they've been close for the last 60 years. It's just a bond that can't be broken.

Keely:

Throughout history, the infantry has been the backbone of the U.S. military. The National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia, pays tribute to the brave soldiers of World War II, and to all infantry, both present and past.

Music

Keely VO:

The Infantry is the oldest and largest branch of the U.S. Military. They are whose sacrifices have been among the greatest, the cost in blood and lives among the steepest, and whose acts of sometimes superhuman valor are among the most noteworthy.

Frank Hanner:

The infantrymen are the U.S. Army's foot soldiers, and they can enter battle from many different ways. One is airborne. One is armored infantry. The other would be air assault, coming in by helicopters, fast-roping to the ground.

Keely VO:

More Medals of Honor have been awarded to the Infantry than any other branch of the Military. But that heroism comes at a price. Almost 80 percent of all casualties also come from the Infantry.

Frank Hanner:

This museum is designed to remember what they have done for our country, the sacrifices they have made, and to train the young soldiers that are trained here at Fort Benning to be Infantrymen.

Keely VO:

Each artifact comes from one of thousands of Americans that have answered the call of duty.

Frank Hanner:

This is the oil painting that we had commissioned of Captain Bobby Brown at Aachen, Germany. Captain Brown was born in Dublin, Georgia, and he was sitting around the table with his family one day, and the father told him that there was just no room for Bobby anymore and he was going to have to get out and make his way in the world. And so he thumbed his way and walked to Columbus, Georgia, and he enlisted in the United States Army, and came out to

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Fort Benning. General George S. Patton came on the post, and they were setting up the Second Armored Division. And he said, "They're gonna go to war, and I want to see if I can do a good job; be a good soldier. And on that fateful day in Normandy, on the 6th of June 1944, all the officers in his unit were either wounded or killed, and he was given another battlefield promotion to captain. And eventually he goes to Aachen, Germany, and this is what the painting depicts...

Keely VO:

Each soldier was a flesh and blood American with dreams and plans and loved ones that they might or might not see again. As you walk through the museum you can't help but to think of the individuals that you knew, or in my case never knew. My grandfather was with the 31st Infantry, stationed in the Philippines during World War II. He was taken as a prisoner of war along with thousands of other soldiers. He would have worn a POW uniform like this one.

Frank Hanner:

Each person has their own individual story or reason for coming to the museum, and probably the best thing I like to see is a young recruit leave here feeling that they're a part of something that's very big and something that's very necessary for our country to have.

Keely VO:

The museum has long ago outgrown its space. Many artifacts cannot be displayed because of space limitations. There is the need to make space for new displays.

Frank Hanner:

We're going to have a brand new museum, and we'll be able to influence a lot of people to realize what the soldier has done for our country in all our wars, and what he continues to do, and the sacrifice that is involved with any type of military service, be it peace time or war time.

Music

Keely VO:

Every war has its heroes. We must never forget them. Some were called heroes, others were called grunts, but all were members of a band of brothers who fought for this country and for the freedom and liberty we enjoy today. The values of duty, courage, and leadership are the hallmarks of the Infantry and must be, and will be preserved.

Music

David:

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One haunting element of war is the capture and imprisonment of soldiers by enemy forces. These men and women are known as POWs, or prisoners of war. In Andersonville, Georgia, there's a museum that pays homage to all American POWs.

David VO:

Andersonville, Georgia is best known as a prisoner of war camp during the Civil War, where over 45,000 Union soldiers were kept, and nearly 13,000 of them died from disease, poor sanitation, malnutrition, overcrowding, or exposure. However, the Andersonville National Historic Site has since become the only National Park System area to serve as a memorial to all American prisoners of war, not just those in the Civil War.

Fred Boyles:

The whole POW experience is a very personal story. And I think a lot of our visitors, and kids too, start to look at the whole idea of what would it be like if I was in this situation. And our visitors are always transformed by their visit, and they gain a tremendous appreciation and respect for our veterans and for the sacrifices that have been made for our freedom.

David VO:

Tech Sgt. Don Scott of Kennesaw reflects on nearly one year as a World War II POW after his B-17 was shot down over Germany.

Don Scott:

I unsnapped my parachute; somebody hollered at me from behind. I turned around and looked; there was a man in uniform with a rifle pointed at me. And I got up to him and I looked at the side of his helmet, and I could see the emblem of a swastika. I knew I was not in friendly territory.

David VO:

Months pass; the Russians closing in on the Germans from the east, and the British from the west. So Scott was moved from prison camp to prison camp.

Don Scott:

...sort of settled in to a routine of prison life. The Germans made us go outside twice a day to line up and be counted. They wanted to make sure nobody was missing. One of the worst things about being a prisoner was not getting enough to eat. All you thought about was food!

David:

The National Prisoner of War Museum gives visitors the opportunity to hear stories like Sgt Scott's. This interactive experience helps you understand the conditions of POWs during every American war.

Man on film:

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So the main thing that you have to worry about is survival.

Fred Boyles:

We want the visitor to understand as much as possible that personal experience that you go through when everything is stripped away from you and it's just you and the enemy.

David VO:

It includes relics, photographs and video testimony from the heartbreak of capture to the experience to freedom.

Film Narrator:

And we're now free Americans; free to go and come as we please.

Don Scott:

I looked around at some of the houses nearby and they had white flags hanging out the windows. We knew that we were free. We were liberated. The second day of May. And I've celebrated the second day of May every year since then. The happiest day of my life.

Phil:

Submarines have been part of military history as far back as the Civil War, but it was not until World War II that subs began to emerge as a powerful weapon in the Navy's arsenal. To honor and preserve the many contributions made by those who served on these vessels, a museum has been established in St. Mary's, highlighting the history of the submarine.

Music

Phil VO:

Down on the waterfront in historic St. Mary's, you can learn about the role submarines have played throughout history, especially in World War II.

Music

John Crouse:

Our museum is divided into three areas. The first room you come into, and the second room, both on the first floor, dealing with the World War II submarines, and the diesel boats, let's say in the early 1900s. And topside, we have mainly nuclear items on display. And throughout the museum we've got about 30 display cases with different themes in them.

Phil VO:

One theme that veterans hope that visitors appreciate is the importance of submarines in the Second World War.

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Bill Castleberry, Jr.:

We've been known as the Silent Service, and not much is publicized as such, and now we have it here. And a complete history of what occurred during World War II, all the various submarines that took part in it. We lost 52 of them. This is something that the American people should be aware of, and if they ever have the opportunity they would benefit by visiting here. Most of us who served in them, we were at the front lines before anyone else, and we carried the war to Japan, and we brought them to their knees.

George Scheer:

If it hadn't been for American submarines, the war would have lasted another two years. Instead of ending in '45, we would have ended in '47. Admiral Nimitz says, we were the first line of defense, and the only line of offense, and that's the way we operated.

John Crouse:

The submarine force obviously has a lot of wonderful history to preserve and to get out to the public. Just to see the artifacts and just see the equipment. Now we have a periscope and a helm station so they can sit down and take pictures and get a feeling like maybe they are in a submarine, and then we have equipment, such as behind me here, from the *James K. Polk*. It was a ballistic missile submarine, so there's a little bit of the modern time in here.

Phil VO:

The museum itself is located near a modern submarine base, King's Bay.

John Crouse:

We kind of complement each other. People can't go on the sub base, and so they can't see nothing, and they can come here and get an idea. And there's so many different things that have happened that we've done together. There's the *U.S.S. George Bancroft* sail exhibit in front of the submarine base. And we're the ones that raised the money for that. So we've teamed up together on a few projects over the years to make things work.

Phil VO

The St. Mary's Submarine Museum also works to preserve the stories of veterans like George Scheer and Bill Castleberry.

Bill Castleberry, Jr.:

I entered submarine school in the summer of 1941, and completed my training and everything just before World War II started, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. And my submarine class, me included, were transferred to Pearl Harbor. And I went to the *Narwhal*, and went to sea, my first patrol, and it was a rough one. Depth charged, you can't describe what it's like except you're terrified.

George Scheer:

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One out of five people you lost in the war to submarines, submarine warfare. So that's a pretty heavy toll we paid for the freedom that people have today.

Music

Keely:

No examination of World War II would be complete without addressing the Holocaust. A permanent exhibit at the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, entitled "The Absence of Humanity, the Holocaust Years," tells that difficult story using the pictures, memorabilia, and voices of those who survived and who made new lives in Georgia.

Music

Jane Leavey:

The Holocaust was not a natural disaster. It happened because all along the way different groups of people made choices about what to believe, who to follow in terms of political leadership, how to treat people who were different than they were. We're a Jewish Heritage Museum so we try to look at everything through the lens of the Jewish experience. The Holocaust gallery is a mixture of very personal photographs, documents, memorabilia, video testimony from Holocaust survivors who made new lives for themselves in the Atlanta area.

Docent:

Different privileges were taken away from people. First thing you felt was if mother or daddy had a job, their job was taken away from them. You're over the age of six, I want you to wear a yellow star so that I can identify you. Any way I can to make you less than a human being is what I'm going to do.

Jane Leavey:

One of the things that I like to talk about in this gallery is this piece of fabric. I had seen countless individual stars. And it just never occurred to me; I just never thought about that this was how they came. This piece of fabric speaks to me of the industrialization of this whole period of history because you can imagine it on a big roll going in a factory going through a printing press.

Jane Leavey:

The atmosphere in it is very architectural. It was designed by an Atlanta architect who is himself a child survivor of the Holocaust. And he used a number of architectural touches to create a particular ambiance in the gallery and to encourage visitors to not only look around at the walls but to look up towards the ceiling and down towards the floor.

Jane Leavey:

Above us on the ceiling are portions of railroad track that once went into the Treblinka death camp. Ben Hirsch the designer of this gallery and I were in

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Washington at the Holocaust Museum's storage facility, and we saw a lot of these pieces of rail. And Ben said, "I want two of them." And I said to him, "Where are you going to put them?" And he thought for a minute and he said, "I'm going to mount them on the ceiling, lined up with this large photo mural of the railway track going into Birkenau," the killing camp at Auschwitz, really. So I said to him, "But if you put them on the ceiling, they'll be upside down." And Ben thought for a minute and he said, "That's right, the entire world was upside down at this point."

Music

Jane Leavey:

There's something for everybody here. The things that we're talking about, individual responsibility, respect for difference, the importance of community, are really universal in nature.

Music

David:

And that concludes this special episode of Georgia Traveler, Remembering World War II.

Keely:

For more information visit us on the web at [WWW DOT GPB DOT ORG](http://WWW.DOT.GPB.DOT.ORG).

Phil:

We hope you'll join us for the next episode of Georgia Traveler. Until then, I'm Phil Proctor...

Keely:

I'm Keely Muse...

David:

And I'm David Zelski. Thanks for watching.

Music

Woman VO:

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Man VO:

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Woman VO:

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