

# Stephen Ambrose HISTORICAL TOURS



AN ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2001

## Tours Scheduled for 2002

*Italian Campaign*  
April 17-28, 2002

*D-Day to the Rhine Tour*  
April 30-May 12, 2002  
June 1-13, 2002  
September 3-15, 2002  
October 8-20, 2002

*Civil War Tour*  
Please Call For Dates

*Corps of Discovery*  
July 6-16, 2002  
July 27-August 6, 2002

*Transcontinental  
Railroad Tour*  
September, 2002

*Weekend in New Orleans*  
Please Call For Dates

## CONTACT US

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**O**ur October 2001 D-Day to the Rhine Tour was most special indeed. Our itinerary was the same as all our previous tours, but this time, as we followed the path of Ike's Army, we did so mindful that we were a nation at war.

Everyone felt the strange sensation of being American in England, just as the Americans had almost sixty years earlier. We watched Prime Minister Tony Blair on television as he addressed Parliament, and listened to President George W. Bush speak to our nation. It was easy to transport ourselves back in time to that other great Anglo/American team—Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt. The unfolding of the story of the Crusade in Europe melded in with news and video footage of our war in Afghanistan.

Our tour participants were not squeamish about going to Europe. In the truest sense of American freedom, forty eight of us proudly wore pins and other emblems of the U.S. and Great Britain, and generally amazed some European operators who had seen other tours cancel out of fear. Franklin Roosevelt had told Americans about fear, and President Bush delivered to us a new message about not giving in to terror. We were proud of our country and each other.

My heartfelt thanks to all who have joined me for this remarkable experience, and I invite future travelers to follow Eisenhower's path. I can promise you an experience like no other.

Ronald Drez

## LETTER FROM *Yakir Katz*



photo by Grace Ambrose



*Stephen Ambrose and Dick Winters at the Utah Beach premiere of HBO's Band of Brothers.*

photo by Grace Ambrose



*Andrea and Andy Ambrose serenade riders, including Donnie Wahlberg (at left) on a Seine River cruise, part of HBO's Band of Brothers premiere week.*

To all of our customers and traveling friends,

I have thoroughly enjoyed all the trails my work has taken me on in the last several months. I began the season with a winter trip to the Normandy beaches in preparation for our first D-Day Youth Expedition Tour. Then, in the spring, Ron and I had a delightful tour in Italy. The famous food, scenery and wine were a perfect complement to the locals, and I could see why the Italians never made great fighters. It was sobering too, as we came to appreciate how hard the Allies had to fight over such punishing terrain.

Fast forward to July and our first Lewis and Clark Tour. Stephen Ambrose welcomed the group at the Grand Union Hotel, where we stayed in Fort Benton. The group paddled fifty miles on the Missouri River in temperatures over 100 degrees and strong head-wind, but there is nothing like hardship to pull people together—not to mention swimming right beside the campsite each night, and catered gourmet meals. The rest of the tour went just as well with many spectacular views and highlights along the way.

I hope you all enjoyed the Band of Brothers mini-series. It was a thrill to see the veterans and the actors who play them at the Premiere. I am looking forward to December and the next big event at the Museum, the unveiling of the new Pacific Wing, December 7, 2001. Hopefully we'll see some of you then.

### BE INFORMED

We are updating our mailing database. Please send your e-mail address to [jennifer@stephenambrosetours.com](mailto:jennifer@stephenambrosetours.com) so that we can add you to our database.

Please be assured we will NOT share your e-mail information with any other company or individual.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yakir Katz".

Yakir Katz  
Director of Operations



LETTER FROM  
*Captain Ron Drez (USMC),  
Vice President*

REPORT ON RECENT TOURS

We followed up our June D-day Tour with a trip to a very different locale. We traveled the trail of the great American explorers Lewis and Clark with our first Corps of Discovery Tour. Yakir Katz joined us for this first Expedition, and together with Judy we hosted thirty history and heritage enthusiasts on the Lewis and Clark Trail. We began at Coal Banks landing on the Missouri River, about sixty miles east of Great Falls.

Our three day canoe trip revealed spectacular scenery including the white cliffs, and we read from the Lewis and Clark journals at every stop. Nor were we lacking in good food because Celeste Ambrose ably catered each meal. On the fourth day, we abandoned our canoes and took to our coach, following the Trail through Great Falls and the portage site, on to the Gates of the Rocky Mountains and Three Forks. From there, we paused at Camp Fortunate before crossing the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass and on into Idaho.

Travelers' Rest was a special treat as we had an audience with the archeologist conducting the exploration for the actual campsite. We concluded

our exciting retrace in the Captain's footsteps with a three hour horseback ride on the Lolo Trail, and then a picnic and hike across Lewis and Clark Pass.

Our farewell banquet celebrated new friendships, new experiences, and a wonderful time.

Look elsewhere in our newsletter for a new tour that we are mapping out for Spring 2002.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Drez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Lewis & Clark  
Corps of Discovery  
Tour*



*Harlan at Smoking Place*



*Staging Area For Horseback Tour*



*The Luellens at Smoking Place*

See page 5 for a brief report from Ron on our newest tour.

# 1<sup>ST</sup> D-DAY YOUTH EXPEDITION

In June 2001, we sent our first group of students on an Educational Tour. The group consisted of 25 eleventh graders from the LaSalle Institute in Troy, NY, and their teacher, Christopher Paul. Please read his letter below:

The Youth Expedition tour gave a group of students from the LaSalle Institute an excellent experience of the Normandy Landings. The tour presented this first group of students with a most instructive and enjoyable immersion in and encounter with one of the most amazing chapters in American history.

Through the many sights on the tour itinerary, my students gained a better understanding of the "big picture" of Operation Overlord. They also walked away with a great appreciation for the "average" soldier-heroes who made the Allies' victory possible. This appreciation was promoted through the presence of two such heroes of the war, Starling Holloway and Al Sponheimer.

I would recommend that all teachers of history make a concerted effort to provide their students with this once in a lifetime opportunity.



Point du Hoc



Dining in France

Sincerely,

*Christopher Paul*  
LaSalle Institute

## D-DAY MUSEUM SET TO OPEN PACIFIC EXHIBITION



The D-Day Museum will celebrate its next great permanent exhibit with the opening of the "D-Day Invasions in the Pacific" on December 7-8, 2001. You are invited to join us for what promises to be a memorable weekend honoring our Pacific veterans for their contributions to the victory in World War II.

For more information on the weekend festivities, contact the Museum directly at 1-800-273-4463 or 504-410-0221.

*Infantry Assault  
on D-DAY*

# THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

April 17-28, 2002

10 Days USA / USA

Sorrento – Isle of Capri – Cassino – Anzio – Rome

12 Days USA / USA

Sorrento – Isle of Capri – Cassino – Anzio – Rome – Florence

## RON DREZ *on the* ITALIAN CAMPAIGN TOUR

In May of this year, Judy, Yakir and I set our sights on the Italian boot to begin laying out the route for our newest tour, to begin in the spring of 2002.

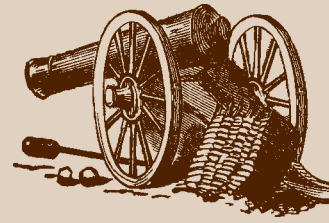
The intent of our Italian Campaign tour is to follow the path of the Americans under General Mark Clark from their landing at Salerno to the liberation of Rome. Opposed by tough German forces commanded by Field Marshall Kesselring, the 5<sup>th</sup> Army slugged it out over hostile, mountainous terrain at places such as Naples, Monte Lungo, San Pietro, the Rapido River, Anzio and Monte Cassino.

Stops at Pompeii, Rome and Florence will ensure an exciting history and heritage tour for all who join us. (Of course, left unsaid is the wonderful experience of eating authentic Italian food along the way!) Judy and I hope you will be able to come along.



Yours,

**Stephen Ambrose Historical Tours is working with Continental Airlines to secure competitive airfare for our tour participants. Contact us for more information.**



CIVIL WAR TOUR  
APRIL 2001

*Testimonial from  
Paul Ruud, Tour Participant*

The tour was indeed marvelous, and I'm certain that it will grow even more so as we think back to everything that we saw and experienced. On reflection, I do appreciate more the "campaign" approach taken by the Ambrose crew...the temptation for tour companies would be to ignore the more remote, more difficult sites and head right to Vicksburg! I hold out Franklin as the most emotional. One could almost smell the gunpowder!

Yours Truly,

*Paul Ruud*

Paul Ruud

*This year's tour of the Western sites and battlefields of the Civil War yielded much surprise. Franklin was one of the unchartered treats the group found on their own and quite thoroughly enjoyed.*



*Edie Ambrose*

## *Women of WWII:* ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

There is much to write about from the last six months. The Weekend in New Orleans was a big highlight of 2001, and I am told there was a lot of adventure on the Lewis and Clark Trail. The Civil War Tour was also a great success. Since all the new developments are covered in the rest of the newsletter, I want to use my space to describe a new oral history project.

In conjunction with the National D-Day Museum, the Eisenhower Center and my colleagues and students at Xavier University, I have begun collecting the oral histories of women who lived through World War II. We are looking for women who remember the war years, and we want to know how you did it. How did we win the war?

Each new generation will have its own questions, so we hope to

preserve as many individual accounts as we can. It doesn't matter if you went abroad or stayed home. We want to hear from mothers, daughters, sisters, nurses, WACs and WAVES. If you will contact us, we will dispatch an oral history packet with instructions for recording your memories. It is very similar to the one the veterans used in giving theirs.

Stephen Ambrose began soliciting WWII veterans' oral histories two decades ago. Now the Eisenhower Center at the University of New Orleans has over two thousand tapes and transcripts in its archives. It is those tapes that created the National D-Day Museum. They also give the world a historic legacy. Our project seeks to complement that collection with its female counterpart.

In March 2003, a symposium at the D-Day Museum will honor the women of World War II. The gathering will draw scholars in the field and women who can speak from experience. Together,

the oral history project and symposium should lead to a new exhibit at the Museum on women in the war.

This project was my Uncle Stephen's idea, and he is right. We must not squander our living historic resources. Please contribute your stories by sending them to the address below. We will transcribe your oral history and send a copy for your review. The finished transcript will go on file at the Eisenhower Center. I look forward to hearing from you and maybe even meeting you at the symposium in 2003.

Sincerely,

Edie Ambrose

*Edie Ambrose is an Assistant Professor of History at Xavier University. You may send your contributions for the Women in World War II Project to:*

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