

D-DAY MUSEUM OPENS IN NEW ORLEANS

On June 6th of this year, 56 years after America sent her best and brightest to the beaches of Normandy, the National D-Day Museum in New Orleans opened its doors to the world. It is the only museum in the U.S. Dedicated to the single-most decisive event of the 20th century, the invasion of Normandy by forces of Britain, Canada and the United States.

The museum is built on the very site where Tom Higgins built the amphibious, flat-bottomed boats that General Eisenhower claimed "won the war." Included in the collection of artifacts and exhibits on display is a scale model of the "Higgins Boat", reconstructed from the original plans.

On the second floor, a 110-seat theater presents a 54 minutes film, "D-Day Remembered", using voices of the actual participants in Operation Overlord. Another room portrays the history of events that led to D-Day.

The German side of the War is depicted as well with a large cut-away model of an elaborately built concrete bunker. Author Stephen Ambrose collected over 3,000 stories told to him by men whose memories of those days are still vivid. Most of these taped accounts are stored away for safe-keeping but many are featured in various exhibits in the museum.

The museum staff has went to great lengths to help visitors get a personal reaction from their visit, not just be told what happened.

The grand opening in June may have been the last great gathering of the men who undertook the "Great Crusade". World War 2 vets are slipping into the shadows. There are just 6 million of them left, and they are leaving us at a rate of 1,000 per day. The new museum will help history remember what happened over there, providing a lesson for future generations.

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