Questions for February 5, 2014 Book Discussion of The Monument Men

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General Information for The Art Lovers Book Club
All art lovers with Figge Museum Membership or admission to museum are invited to attend a book club which explores the world of art through discussions relating to art history, artists' lives, artwork, periods in art, etc. Each program, led by a Figge Docent or volunteer, includes a short introduction on the book and author. The program leader provides discussion questions in advance of each session. Bring a brown bag lunch if desired. The list of books selected for 2014 is available on the www.figgeartmuseum.org website under Education and Adult Programs.

Location: Figge Art Museum, West 2nd Street, Davenport, IA. The Art Lovers Book Club meets in the Figge Café on the first Wednesday at 1:00 in the afternoon in February, May, June, July, August, September, October, and November.

For more information contact Heather Aaronson at Figge Art Museum, 563-326-7804 Ex 2045 or e-mail haaronson@figgeartmuseum.org

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Questions for the first Wednesday, February 5, 2014 book *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History* by Robert M. Edsel with Brent Witter. Carol Ehlers is discussion leader.

(For reference, in the back of the book, there is a list of Cast of Characters. In the front of the book, under author's notes are listed the Main Characters. Also, the book includes a map with the Monuments Men travels.)

Discussion Questions for *The Monuments Men*:

1. Introduction Question ---Each member provide their thoughts on this question: what did you find most fascinating about Monuments Men? Which story or incident touched you the most or shocked you?

2. Discuss Hitler's fascination with art and its power. How does this compare with:
    a. Reichsmarschall Hermann Goring, Head of Luftwaffe
    b. Alfred Rosenberg, Head of the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR)
    c. Albert Speer, Hitler's personal architect
    d. Prof Dr. count Franz von Wolff-Metternich, Head of Kunstschutz in Paris, the German arts and monuments protection program

    Are there other German characters that you wish to note for their fascination or unique story protecting art?

3. Robert Edsel calls the Monuments Men, "The Heroes of Civilization." What does he mean? What common traits or aspects did this group of men possess? What kept them going?

4. Looking at the Main Characters, which one(s) were you drawn to? Why? How did their background prepare them for their task? What in their personal stories or background drew you in? What was their sacrifice?

    a. Major Ronald Edmund Balfour, First Canadian Army
    b. Private Harry Ettlinger, U.S. Seventh Army
    c. Captain Walker Hancock, U.S. First Army
    d. Captain Walter "Hutch" Hancock, U.S. First Army
    e. Jacques Jaujard, director of French National Museum
    f. Private First Class Lincoln Kirsten, U.S. Third Army
    g. Captain Robert Posey, U.S. Third Army
    h. Second Lieutenant James J. Rorimer, Comm Zone and U.S. Seventh Army
    i. Lieutenant George Stout, U.S. First Army and U.S. Twelfth Army Group

5. Rose Valland is listed as a Main Character. Robert Edsel has said, "Rose Valland is my candidate for the greatest heroine of WWII." Do you agree? What about Rose made her so special? Discuss her relationship with James Rorimer and Jacques Jaujard. Discuss how her personality would determine her later life.

6. Looking on page 428-430, do you feel that there were any heroes in the character list of Germans and Nazis?

7. Discuss George Stout's leadership qualities. How did his knowledge and passion for art conservation come into play? Discuss some specific examples of his creativity in the field. What was his relationship with the other Monuments Men? Can you give a specific example or quote given by other Monument Men in reference to George Stout?

8. Why do you think this is a relatively unknown story?