



RELEASE

WPSU-TV TO AIR KEN BURNS DOCUMENTARY SERIES "THE WAR"

UNIVERSITY PARK, PA (September 17, 2007) - WPSU-TV will air the new Ken Burns documentary series, "The War," beginning September 23 at 8 p.m. The 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 get caught up in the greatest cataclysm in human history.

"The War" will air over two weeks beginning Sunday, September 23, 2007, (four nights the first week and then three nights the second week), 8-10 p.m. on WPSU-TV. WPSU-TV will repeat each episode the night it airs and launch the film as a weekly series after its first two-week run on Wednesdays at 9 p.m. A Web page dedicated to "The War" has been launched at <http://pbs.org/thewar> online. There are also local components to the site available at www.wpsu.org/thewar online.

Six years in the making, this epic 15-hour film, reminiscent in scope and power of Burns's landmark series The Civil War, 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.

"The Second World War was so massive, catastrophic and complex, it is almost beyond the mind's and the heart's capacity to process everything that happened and, more important, what it meant on a human level," said Burns.

By focusing on the personal stories of ordinary Americans who had extraordinary experiences, the film tries to bring one of the biggest events in the history of the world down to a very intimate scale. And in the end, we all begin to see that there are no "ordinary lives."

Accompanying the series will be an extensive educational outreach component and an interactive Web page that provides more information on the film, the battles and related issues.

In addition to Keith David's narration, "The War" features first-person voices read by some of America's greatest actors. Tom Hanks reads the voice of Al McIntosh, the editor of the Rock County Star-Herald in Luverne, Minnesota, whose weekly columns poignantly tried to explain the unexplainable to his neighbors. Other voices include Josh Lucas, Bobby Cannavale, Samuel L. Jackson, Eli Wallach, Robert Wahlberg, Carolyn McCormack, Adam Arkin and Kevin Conway.

WPSU serves central Pennsylvania with programming, educational services and community outreach. This public media service produces, acquires and distributes programs that address local interests and reflect the diverse cultural, political, geographic and demographic characteristics of an audience within central Pennsylvania.

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