



OSS

The History, People and Legacy of America's First Shadow Warriors

Overview: *OSS* is a documentary to memorialize the history, people and legacy of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS): America's first Shadow Warriors. It is a first person, primary source narrative, told by veteran OSS operatives, and reinforced by historians, leaders and current members of the Intelligence and Special Operations community who have benefited from this unique heritage.

Not merely a historical study, *OSS* will focus on the individual lives and sacrifices of the original operatives. It will document the pioneering role of the OSS, the evolution of this breed of warrior through time, and how the hard lessons learned at the outset are being applied to today's battlefields. In tribute, members of today's Intelligence and Special Operations community, fresh off of the front lines, will share personal stories of how the OSS impacted their missions and lives.

Background: In the wake of the 9/11 attacks the United States successfully deployed the greatest combined Intelligence and Special Operations effort in history in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Only 60 years before, shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, an elite group of the greatest generation chose to be the first Americans to spearhead operations into the dangerous world of shadow warfare. In a mere four years, the operatives of the OSS undertook some of the most audacious and harrowing missions of World War II, creating a legacy which resulted in the birth of the Central Intelligence Agency and the modern Special Operations forces.

To date, the U.S. has yet to truly memorialize the sacrifices these original OSS men and woman made in service to their nation. This documentary is the beginning of that deserved memorial.

Documentary Structure: This documentary is organized into three sections. The first section explores the history of the OSS. The second section explores its' people. The third section explores the OSS' legacy through the present and how this legacy has impacted the U.S.'s current shadow wars.

The primary vehicle of expression will be interviews with OSS veterans, surviving family members, US decision makers in the Military and Intelligence communities, and the OSS's contemporary counterparts – operators from the U.S. Special Operations and Intelligence communities. Additionally, the documentary will show never before seen pictures, correspondence and footage from OSS members, and will film onsite at locations used by the OSS for training and operations.



PART I – History: *OSS* begins with an overview of the formation of the OSS. In 1942, as the Department of Defense underwent reorganization to respond to German and Japanese aggression against the U.S., General William ‘Wild Bill’ Donovan, under orders of President Franklin Roosevelt, created the OSS with the core mission of conducting espionage and special operations behind enemy lines. Starting from scratch, Donovan turned to the British for guidance and scoured the U.S. for recruits, filling the ranks of this groundbreaking service with the best and brightest, from elite military personnel and Ivy Leaguers to magicians and filmmakers.

The recruits immediately entered impromptu crash courses in survival techniques, deadly hand-to-hand “Gutter Fighting”, cryptography, guerrilla warfare, and spy handling. Within months the first operatives were parachuting behind enemy lines to start a long series of operations, which were invaluable to the success of global allied operations.

OSS highlights the creation of the OSS organization and its partnership with the British equivalents of the organization. It details the high politics of the formation of this organization, including Roosevelt’s personal involvement, and the personal stories behind many of these decisions. The documentary then goes on to detail the recruitment and training of OSS operatives and will include on site footage from locations of OSS training facilities, command centers and operational locations.

Although many of the OSS’ most famous operations and individuals have been detailed in previous documentaries, even in feature films, *OSS* uses a holistic approach to put these operations into context, offer new insights into how the operations fit into U.S. WWII war strategy, and demonstrates how these operations have served as the basis for current US intelligence and special operations.

PART II – People: Perhaps the most compelling aspect of *OSS* is the personalities interviewed. At it’s founding, the OSS represented the best and brightest the U.S. had to offer. These include filmmakers such as John Ford to the professional baseball player Moe Berg to the chef Julia Child. Although their pedigree was diverse, the original members of the OSS were unanimously dedicated to service to the U.S. above all else; a dedication to national service which continues through today.

OSS looks at the people and personalities that made up the OSS through interviews with the veterans themselves and surviving family members. It addresses a host of questions, to include what kind of personalities volunteered for the OSS, what their backgrounds were, what their families knew and how they reacted, and what these men and women went on to do after the war. The intent of this documentary is to enable U.S. citizens to move beyond the James Bond stereotype by exploring the real men and women as individuals and unique members of the greatest generation. For



example, *OSS* will interview a couple who served together and were married while serving in the *OSS* in north Africa during the war.

PART III – Legacy: The *OSS* laid the groundwork for what would become some of the most important military and civilian organizations in post-war U.S. history, including the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Special Operations Command (SOCOM), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and many more. Indeed, more than just leading to the creation of new agencies, the *OSS* veterans have personally inspired generations of special operations and intelligence officers. In the post-9/11 world these organizations and their dedicated officers are leading at the tip of the spear, fighting the war on terror and protecting the U.S. as the *OSS* once did.

OSS documents the legacy these organizations owe to the *OSS*. It offers past and current members of these decedents of the *OSS* the opportunity to pay tribute to the sacrifices made by its veterans. *OSS* documents first person narrative stories and anecdotes about how the *OSS* affected the creation, cultures and current incarnations of these organizations. It provides insight into where many of the *OSS* officers ended up and how they helped to create these new organizations. Finally, *OSS* draws parallels between the current intelligence and special operations of today's wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, the War On Terror and the *OSS* operations of World War II.

Documentary Details: This documentary will be based on in person interviews with *OSS* veterans, current members of the intelligence community and special operations forces, archival footage from World War II and new footage from locations relevant to the *OSS*.

Individuals and organizations to be interviewed will include:

- Veterans of the *OSS*
- Surviving family members of *OSS* veterans
- Historians specializing in the *OSS* and WWII
- Current and past leaders of the CIA, DIA and other intelligence agencies
- Current and past commanders of SOCOM and other special operations organizations such as the Navy SEALs
- Current special operations and intelligence community officers, including recent veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Locations for shooting will include:

- *OSS* training facility, Camp X (near Toronto)
- *OSS* training facility, Area B (Camp David)
- *OSS* training facility, Area F (Bethesda Congressional Country Club)
- Headquarters of US intelligence agencies and military special operations forces



CIVILIAN VETERANS association

Footage and historical documents:

- First person interviews of individuals
- Footage of locations relevant to the OSS
- Publically released footage of OSS operations, US National Archives
- Private footage provided by OSS veterans and family members
- Documentation of the OSS and those who served (publically released by the National Archives in 2008)
- FOIAs filed for further release of OSS footage and documentation
- Footage from current conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and the War On Terror

The documentary will be feature length. It will be filmed in high-definition color with some archival footage in black and white.

Expeditionary Productions LLC: Expeditionary Productions combines filmmakers with military and intelligence community veterans and experts to make realistic and thought provoking films. Our team has extensive and intimate access to veterans of OSS as well as current Special Operations and Intelligence Community members. This allows us to attain our goal of telling truly compelling and accurate stories of those who have served and continue to serve in the US Armed Forces and Intelligence Community.

Civilian Veterans Association: This documentary will be filmed in partnership with the Civilian Veterans Association (CVA). The CVA exists to support, advocate for and memorialize Civilian Veterans. A portion of profits from this documentary will go toward the support of civilian veterans and their families and to the memorialization of the OSS.

Contact Information

www.civilianveteran.org
info@civilianveteran.org
(703) 504-8654