

## **Americans Remembered Helps with Patriotic Program for Veterans Day**

*Americans Remembered president Bob Babcock was narrator of a patriotic program at the Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta, GA on Sunday night, November 9. The program was entitled, "Let Freedom Ring" and was attended by over 3,000 people including over 150 WWII vets (who were the honored guests).*

*During the main event, Americans Remembered had a segment to talk specifically about the work of Americans Remembered and the Veterans History Project. Following is the script which will give you a better understanding of the work we are doing:*

### **Freedom requires of us another responsibility - We must never forget our heroes of freedom.**

My name is Bob Babcock and I want to take a few minutes to tell you about the work we are doing with Americans Remembered and the Veterans History Project.....

When I retired from IBM just over a year ago, my wife, Jan, encouraged me to follow my passion and do something in my next career that I love. As long as I can remember, I have been a fan of the military. As a young boy, I recall watching the troop trains go through my hometown in Oklahoma during the Korean War -- and how much that always fascinated me. My best friend and I always played Army. Little did I know that one day I would be an Infantry platoon leader in a place called Vietnam.

After much soul searching after my retirement, Jan and I decided that the Veterans History Project was where we would spend the next phase of our lives. The Veterans History Project is a public law, passed unanimously by Congress in October 2000. It's sole mission is to preserve the memories of America's veterans and home front workers - from all our wars, WWI through today's War on Terror, and from all our military services - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines - plus, preserve the memories of those who stayed home and supported them in various ways.

In September 2002, Americans Remembered, our non-profit corporation was born. As an Official Partner of the Veterans History Project, our mission is the same as theirs - preserve the memories of America's veterans and home front workers.

Why is this work important?

You can read the big picture about America's wars in the history books. But that is not the story we are trying to preserve. Each person who served in the military, or supported them in some way from home, has an important thread in the rich tapestry that makes up America's military history. In 60 to 90 minute videotape interviews, we capture the emotions and the individual stories that make up our history.

Whether it is the horror of being the lead element in the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp or the creative story of turning whiskey into stained glass windows for a chapel in Vietnam, we are preserving individual experiences that are so critical to our American experience.

Sadly, we are losing our veterans at the rate of 1,700 each and every day of the year. Time is of the essence if we are to preserve their stories before they are gone and the memories are lost forever.

What do we need from you in this effort of national importance?

First, we can not do all the interviews ourselves. We need volunteers to interview our veterans. All you need is access to a video camera and the desire to listen to stories of our veterans and home front workers. We will teach you how to get started. By devoting one half day per month to interviewing, you can easily contribute 36 interviews in a year's time. Gary Swanson, our most prolific volunteer, has completed 200 interviews already this year.

Some of our volunteers are in the audience tonight. Robert Quigley, Director of Cobb Government Access TV 23, who is filming this event, has made their studios available to us to preserve some of the memories. Tom Estrada has helped immensely with our efforts at TV23. John Fraser, a retired Army chaplain and Methodist minister, has taken the challenge and is doing several interviews each month. Joe Daniell has helped us immensely in all aspects of our work.

Second, for those who can't do interviews, you can help with monetary contributions. All partners of the Veterans History Project have to be self funded, so that is an area where we could use everyone's help.

Third, we need our veterans and home front workers to volunteer to tell your stories. I firmly believe that each of us has an obligation to ourselves, our family, our unit, and our country to insure that our stories are preserved for future generations of the world to learn from.

On the back of the card in your program is a way for you to tell us about your interest. Please fill those out and pass them to the end of the row tonight or mail them to us when you get home.

The benefits you will gain from participating in the Veterans History Project will be enormous.

Jan will be in the lobby after this event and I will be here at the front of the room to answer any questions you may have.