

RED WHITE BLACK & BLUE

PRESS MATERIALS

ON JUNE 7, 1942 JAPAN INVADED ALASKA.

IT IS THE ONLY INVASION OF AMERICAN SOIL SINCE THE WAR OF 1812.

4,000 PEOPLE DIED.

NOW, 60 YEARS LATER, ONE MAN HAS COME TO TAKE IT BACK.

"A wrenching look at a forgotten battle."

The Boston Globe

"With unerring visual acumen, *Red White Black & Blue* rescues the battle from oblivion while asking how 4,000 dead soldiers became an obscure footnote in history...

Reveals the psychological scars of warfare with a respect that doesn't preclude deeper questions about morality."

Variety

"A fascinating look at a footnote of history that might have changed the war's outcome had the U.S. not prevailed. Grade: A"

The Christian Science Monitor

"An invaluable history lesson and a window into two underappreciated heroes... Essential viewing."

DocumentaryFilms.net

**A Salon.com Prime Pick
A Los Angeles Times Highlight**

[i]NDEPENDENTLENS 

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DESCRIPTION

Short Description:

Walk through one of the bloodiest battles of World War II with the soldiers who lived it. Through their eyes you'll experience the complicated, and sometimes contradictory, mindset of a nation at war and what it really means to be an American hero.

Expanded Description:

"My job was to kill Japanese, and that's what I did."

Bill Jones and Andy Petrus are the two toughest 85-year-olds you've ever met.

Together, these life-long friends fought 3,000 Japanese in a secret Alaskan invasion during World War II. Now, 60 years later, these two forgotten heroes embark on an intense and emotional journey back to the remote Aleutian island of Attu, where they relive the brutal 19-day battle that the American government kept secret.

As Bill and Andy retrace their steps over this desolate, untouched battlefield -- a living museum littered with crashed airplanes, collapsing buildings, and unexploded bombs -- the line between past and present begins to blur and long-forgotten memories resurface with moving force.

Red White Black & Blue isn't just one soldier's story -- it is the story of every soldier who faces an enemy he does not understand and returns home with scars that are slow to heal.

Walk through one of the bloodiest battles of World War II with the soldiers who lived it. Through their eyes you'll experience the complicated, and sometimes contradictory, mindset of a nation at war and what it really means to be an American hero.

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CONTACTS AND OTHER INFORMATION

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Technical Information:

Running Time: 86 minutes (theatrical version)
53 minutes (broadcast version)
Shooting Formats: DVCam video, 16mm film
Aspect Ratio: 1:1.77 (hard matte)
Sound: Dolby stereo LTRT, English
Screening Formats: 16x9 HDCam, 16x9 DigiBeta, 4x3 DigiBeta,
4x3 BetaSP, DVCam, DVD

**FOR STILLS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT
THE OFFICIAL "RED WHITE BLACK & BLUE" WEBSITE
www.alaskainvasion.com**

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THE STORY

One Soldier's Journey

"This story I am about to tell you is true. I tell it not for personal attention but rather that you who were never in mortal combat can get a picture of what your husbands, fathers, sons, and neighbors were confronted with when laying their lives on the line so you wouldn't have to."

-- Bill Jones

In the year following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Empire of Japan grew bolder in its offensive against the United States and invaded the remote Aleutian island of Attu in preparation for a larger invasion into Canada and the lower 48 states. Although Attu was the only American territory to be held by a foreign nation since the War of 1812, the American public was not informed of this transgression in fear that widespread panic would ensue.

Nearly 4,000 soldiers would die in the American campaign to take the island of Attu back.

Red White Black & Blue is a feature-length documentary that recounts the story of one soldier's journey into one of the bloodiest battles of World War II... And his continuing struggle to come to grips with what happened there and ensure that the sacrifices of the young men who died there are recognized and remembered today.

In a calculated risk, the filmmakers escorted 83-year-old Bill Jones and fellow battle veteran Andy Petrus to the wind-swept terrain of Attu to tell their story right where it happened six decades ago.

Over the course of two weeks, it becomes clear that Bill is still fighting the war in his heart and mind. He confronts not only ghosts from the past but a real specter in the form of a 2-ton, 22-foot-tall Japanese monument placed on the same site as a horrific Japanese banzai attack that left American soldiers bayoneted where they slept.

Through intimate interviews with Bill and Andy, the viewer learns what it means to be a soldier then and now. And for Bill, that means continuing the battle -- even at the cost of his own peace of mind.

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PRODUCTION NOTES: FILMING ON ATTU

While researching a narrative script on small unit combat in World War II, filmmakers Michael Harbour, Jeff Malmberg and Tom Putnam came across the story of the Battle of Attu.

Realizing that the battle would be far too expensive to make as a traditional action film, the filmmakers decided to tell the story as a documentary. The three had previously completed two fiction short films, "Tom Hits His Head" (an official selection of more than 190 film festivals and winner of over a dozen major awards, including the Spirit of Slamdance award at the Slamdance Film Festival and Grand Jury Prize at Aspen Shortsfest) and the Fox Searchlab short "Broadcast 23", which premiered at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival.

According to director Tom Putnam: "We wanted our film to have a main character and a supporting 'cast of characters', just like a narrative film. And, unlike many documentaries, which rely on a narrator to fill in the gaps, we wanted our story to be told by the guys who lived it." This was no easy feat as few soldiers survived the initial battle and most Attu veterans were in their eighties, making a return trip to the island a serious challenge to their health.

The Most Remote Place on Earth

Located 1,200 miles from the nearest hospital and 800 miles from the nearest commercial airport, Attu is one of the most remote places on earth. It has been closed to civilian traffic for the past 60 years, so the only mode of access is a Coast Guard transport plane that drops off supplies every two weeks to the 22-person outpost on the island. "We started asking the Coast Guard to fly us out and put us up for two weeks," recalls producer Michael Harbour. "They said no."

Putnam: "So we just kept asking and asking, and after about a year of this, one day I got a call and they said five of us could go. If we could get ourselves to the Coast Guard base in Kodiak, Alaska, they'd fly us out, put us up, and feed us for two weeks... All for nine dollars a day... Which was great because, up until then we had been putting everything on our credit cards."

Deconstructing the War Documentary

The filmmakers had done extensive research on the island and arrived prepared to incorporate a number of unorthodox techniques to rethink the historical war documentary. In the Spring of 2003, Putnam and producer and editor Jeff Malmberg visited the U.S. National Archives and discovered 60-year-old photos of the island with locations of the shots scribbled on the back. They decided to map out the locations of numerous photos shot by Army and Navy cameramen during the battle so they could match the same lenses and angles for the film's dramatic "then and now" photo sequences. Due to the largely abandoned nature of the island's battlefields, Putnam was able to match actual craters and equipment left behind from the war.

Putnam described other unusual techniques: "Since we couldn't bring other battle vets to the island, we decided to place their taped interviews on a small monitor in various island locations. The result gave them a presence as they talked about their various experiences on Attu."

In addition, the filmmakers used an old Russian 16mm camera for the film's time-lapse photography to show the rapidly changing weather conditions on Attu.

Filming in the "Cradle of Storms"

Commented director of photography Alex Vendler: "This part of the Aleutians is called the 'Cradle of Storms' with good reason. We'd be out in a field somewhere and the sky would be crystal clear, and then 10 minutes later everything would be black, freezing rain would be coming in from every direction, and we'd be struggling against 40 mile-an-hour winds to try and get under cover. And then, a few minutes later, everything would be fine again."

But, despite the rapidly changing weather conditions, the veterans and crew were able to visit all the key locations in the battle. The filmmakers started on the beach in the ominously named Massacre Bay, where Attu veterans Bill and Andy recounted boarding the landing craft on the first day of the battle. And then, each day, they would travel further inland as the veterans recounted the subsequent days of combat.

"Many of these places hadn't seen people since the war," said Putnam. "Attu is like a 30-square-mile museum to World War II. Everywhere you turned there were remnants of the battle."

During their travels, the filmmakers and veterans found an undocumented plane crash, Japanese artillery positions with live rounds still in the chamber, and an unexploded 500-pound bomb.

"We were constantly falling into holes, rolling down hills, getting nails through our boots..." remembered Putnam. In fact, all three crewmembers were seriously injured while filming. Putnam put his back out and ended up with severe tendonitis in one hand. Producer Matt Radecki injured his leg when the vehicle he was riding in rolled over. And Vendler fractured his tailbone after sliding 50 feet down a rocky, grass-covered hillside.

Putnam smiles: "Bill and Andy didn't get a scratch."

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PRODUCTION NOTES: BILL AND ANDY

Director Tom Putnam first met Bill Jones at an Aleutian Island veterans reunion in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

Putnam remembers his first interview with Bill: "Many of the veterans we interviewed had served in the Aleutians during the war, but very few had seen combat. And then Bill sat down. Not only was he on Attu for the entire 18-day battle, but he happened to be at nearly every key moment in that battle, and was even one of only a handful of men who survived a Japanese banzai attack against one of the American medical camps on the battle's final day."

Comments producer Matt Radecki: "We immediately knew that Bill was not only the perfect 'tour guide' to walk us through the battle, but he was also someone who still struggled to come to grips with the many conflicting emotions the battle brings up for him."

After three days of interviews, Putnam and Radecki returned to Los Angeles, and editor/producer Jeff Malmberg began assembling the footage.

The Two Bill Jones

"We were all determined to allow the veterans to tell their own stories," remembers Malmberg. "But what was particularly compelling about Bill's interviews were how many different stories he seemed to tell. In one interview, he would recount that his job was to kill the enemy, no more, no less. In another, he would break down at the thought of what he was forced to do with a flame thrower. It wasn't that he was contradicting himself, but that in order for him to survive, he had to hold two opposing beliefs.

We realized that to tell this story properly, somehow, some way, we needed to take Bill back to the island and allow him to confront his past."

A 60-Year Friendship

A few months later, Putnam, Radecki, and director of photography Alex Vendler found themselves at the Anchorage International Airport waiting for Bill (age 83) and his

friend and fellow Attu veteran Andy Petrus (age 87) to arrive.

Putnam: "Bill had just gotten out of the hospital and I had only spoken to Andy over the phone. And there we were waiting to take these two elderly veterans to one of the most isolated and dangerous places in the Northern Hemisphere."

As it turned out, Bill and Andy were a story unto themselves. Andy, an avid bowler and TV enthusiast, goes to the gym six days a week and has the muscles to prove it. Bill, a retired major, finds solace in his books when he's not battling his emphysema or writing letters to the media and the American government in protest of the Japanese monument on Attu. According to Bill, their friendship began when Andy let him choose which bunk to sleep in. Years later, and on separate coasts, the two comrades have remained good, if not unusual, friends.

"They're All Dead, Andy"

Upon arriving on the island, the filmmakers set up a series of "spy cams" in vehicles and rooms around the station to capture the reality of the journey for the two elderly veterans and some of the frank, seemingly off-camera discussions between Bill and Andy between interviews.

Through these conversations, Bill's true leadership is revealed (he was wounded six times over the course of the war) as well as the harsh reality of front line infantry combat. At one point, Bill and Andy attempt to remember a pivotal location of a Japanese machine gun nest. Bill turns to Andy and comments, "Who's going to argue with us, Andy? They're all dead."

Bill's New Battle

One exceptionally emotional moment of the documentary came with Bill's confrontation of a massive Japanese monument on the island. "We got to a place called Engineer Hill," remembers Putnam, "where on the last day of the battle the final 800 Japanese soldiers charged through the American front lines and overran the Army's medical area. They bayoneted and killed everyone in the camp except for a dozen or so men in one tent. And Bill Jones was in that tent. Bill pulled out all these letters and maps and speeches he had written, and we discovered that he had come back to basically protest this monument being here for our cameras and let the world know that he wanted it removed."

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CREW AND PRODUCTION COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

Three-Headed Monster, LLC (production company) is a Los Angeles-based partnership among filmmakers Michael Harbour, Jeff Malmberg, and Tom Putnam. The three met while students at the University of Southern California's School of Cinema-Television. Their previous short film, "Broadcast 23", was produced by Fox Searchlab and premiered at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival. Other short films include "Tom Hits His Head", an official selection of more than 200 international film festivals. "Tom Hits His Head" has been broadcast on PBS, HBO, ZedTV in Canada, and released theatrically throughout the world.

Rainstorm Entertainment, Inc. (production company) was launched in 2002 by principals Steven G. Kaplan and Gregg L. Daniel after their successful experience producing the horror/comedy "Terror Tract," starring the late John Ritter. The film was sold to USA Films/Universal. The company's first production under the Rainstorm banner was "The Big Empty," which starred Jon Favreau, Rachel Leigh Cook, Daryl Hannah, Kelsey Grammer, and Sean Bean. Artisan Entertainment released the film theatrically, Showtime Networks purchased cable rights, and Lions Gate released the film on DVD.

Tom Putnam (director/producer) has been named "One of the 25 New Faces of Independent Film" by *Filmmaker Magazine* and is a recipient of over a dozen screenwriting and short film awards, including the IFP Fast Track Award. His previous short films include "Broadcast 23" (Sundance 2005) and "Tom Hits His Head," an official selection of over 200 film festivals and one of the most widely-seen short films of all-time. In addition to "Red White Black & Blue," he recently directed the romantic comedy "The Hottie and the Nottie" for Regent Releasing and Summit Entertainment.

Jeff Malmberg (producer/editor) has co-written a number of screenplays and series pilots with his partners Michael Harbour and Tom Putnam. Malmberg's editorial credits include the series pilots for "Dirt Squirrel" starring David Arquette (MTV), 13 episodes of "Drew Carey's Greenscreen Show" (Comedy Central), and the upcoming Regent Releasing romantic comedy "The Hottie and the Nottie". Malmberg also edited and produced the 2005 Sundance short film "Broadcast 23" (Fox Searchlab).

Matt Radecki (producer/director of photography) is the co-director and editor of the documentary feature "TV Junkie," winner of the Special Jury Award at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. He has produced a number of other award-winning documentaries and narrative features, including the theatrically released "Brown's Requiem," starring Michael Rooker and Selma Blair, and based on the novel by James Ellroy.

Michael Harbour (producer) previously produced and co-wrote the short films "Broadcast 23," "Tom Hits His Head," and the blaxploitation parody feature "Shafted!" In addition to writing and producing, Harbour has also worked as a digital effects technical director on dozens of feature films, including "The Day After Tomorrow," "X-Men," "Solaris," and "Die Another Day".

Steven G. Kaplan (executive producer) founded Rainstorm Entertainment in 2002. Since then, he has produced or executive produced the films "Terror Tract," "The Big Empty," "F*CK," "Red White Black & Blue," "Big Bad Wolf," and "The Lost Colony". Kaplan is producing the upcoming Rainstorm features "Long Time Gone," "Bob the Impaler," "The Luckiest Guys on Earth," and "Six Bullets From Now." In 2005, Mr. Kaplan was a co-founder of Launchpad Releasing, LLC, an independent theatrical distributor. After receiving his B.A. from U.C.L.A. in 1985, Kaplan attended Oxford University and earned his J.D. from Loyola Law School in 1988.

Gregg L. Daniel (executive producer) is a member of the Producer's Guild of America and a graduate of the American Film Institute's producing fellowship program. He has held posts at The Walt Disney Company, coordinating visual effects for George Lucas and Francis Coppola's "Captain EO," and worked in the production departments of Jim Abrahams' "Big Business," Garry Marshall's "Beaches," and Steven Spielberg's "Always". Mr. Daniel has produced the horror/comedy "Terror Tract," the sci-fi/noir "The Big Empty," which starred Jon Favreau, Kelsey Grammer, and Daryl Hannah, and was executive producer on the pop culture documentary "F*CK," as well as the thriller "Big Bad Wolf".

Alex Vendler (director of photography) was a 1998 Independent Spirit Award nominee for his first feature film, "The Bible and Gun Club". Vendler has shot more than two dozen feature films, including the Slamdance award-winner and official selection of the Cannes Film Festival "Better Housekeeping"; director Nick Broomfield's

documentary "Kurt and Courtney"; "Very Mean Men" for director Tony Vitale; and "Melvin Goes to Dinner," the directorial debut of "Mr. Show" star Bob Odenkirk.

Jay Clarke (music) is a founding member of Portland-based bands The Standard and Dolorean. He has toured with Clinic, The Shins, Wire, Apples in Stereo, Nine Inch Nails, The Yeah Yeah Yeahs and many other bands.

Jeff Stuart Saltzman (music) has produced and engineered more than a hundred albums, many at Portland Oregon's legendary Jackpot Recording Studio. He has worked on projects for Sleater-Kinney, King Black Acid and Stephen Malkmus of Pavement.

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THE INVASION OF ATTU: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

(Courtesy of George L. Smith)

The battle of Attu was essentially an infantry battle. The climate greatly limited the use of air power as the island was shrouded in fog and experienced high winds almost every day. The terrain -- steep jagged crags, knifelike ridges covered with snow, and boggy tundra -- made the use of mechanized equipment motorized vehicles impractical.

The American troops, some trained and equipped for fighting in desert climates, some totally inexperienced in combat, had found a most formidable enemy in the Japanese who were fully equipped, thoroughly acclimated, and fanatically determined to hold their strong, well chosen, defensive positions.

The arrival of American forces off Attu was uneventful. A dense fog obscured the island and surrounding area. The beaches quickly jammed up with supplies and bogged-down vehicles. The Army soon realized they wouldn't be able to get their artillery or tracked vehicles across the muskeg. It was apparent the battle would have to be fought by the foot soldiers themselves.

Troops in the front lines began to suffer greatly from the effects of the bitter cold. Hundreds of GIs would eventually have their feet amputated as a result of frostbite and trench foot (roughly a quarter of all casualties would be traced to frostbite). American troops, lost in the fog, walked into enemy cross-fires and were pinned down for hours with no reasonable shelter from the cold.

The Americans continued to slug it out for eight days of nearly perpetual combat as the Japanese forged a bloody withdrawal. Finally, on the 18th of May, 1943, with the added help of the "Fighting Fourth," the American northern and southern forces linked up as per the original plan objective.

Badly outnumbered and sensing possible defeat, the Japanese now killed their own wounded by injecting them with morphine. To make sure the job was completed, they then threw hand grenades into their own medical tent.

On the 28th of May, 1943, Colonel Yasuyo Yamasaki, commander of the Japanese forces on Attu, formed a plan that could possibly turn the tide of battle in favor of the Japanese. In the middle of the night he would lead his remaining force of 800 men (of an initial 3000) through a weak point in the American lines, capture an American artillery emplacement, then use it to pin down the Americans long enough to evacuate his surviving forces.

On the 29th of May, 1943, at 3:15a.m., Yamasaki's remaining troops took advantage of the lingering fog and managed to break through the American lines. Ten minutes later, with the artillery battery located on Engineer Hill in sight, the Japanese commander ordered a banzai attack. They killed several American patients in their field hospital and exploded a propane stove in the mess.

The sleeping Americans quickly rallied their forces and threw the Japanese back into the fog after intense close combat. The failure to carry out their plan effectively destroyed the Japanese morale. 500 of the remaining Japanese committed mass suicide (gyokusai) with grenades held close to their stomachs, chests, and foreheads. Yamasaki attempted a final but fruitless charge later in the day with what remained of his force. During this charge he lost his own life to a .30-caliber bullet. The battle for Attu was over.

The casualties incurred during the invasion of Attu were appalling. The Americans suffered 3829 casualties, roughly 25% of the invading force, second only in proportion to Iwo Jima. On the Japanese side, 2351 men were counted by American burial parties, and hundreds more were presumed already buried. Total prisoners taken: 28 (none of whom were officers). The Japanese fought to virtually the last man.

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These are the credits as they appear in the feature-length version of the film. For a list of PBS broadcast credits please contact the filmmakers.

FILM CREDITS

RAINSTORM ENTERTAINMENT Presents
A THREE-HEADED MONSTER Production
Featuring BILL JONES

RED WHITE BLACK & BLUE

Producer/Director TOM PUTNAM
Producer/Editor JEFF MALMBERG
Producer/Director of Photography MATT RADECKI
Producer MICHAEL HARBOUR
Executive Producer STEVEN G. KAPLAN
Executive Producer GREGG L. DANIEL
Director of Photography ALEX VENDLER
Sound Design NATHAN SMITH
Technical & Historical Consultant TED SPENCER
Music by JAY CLARKE & JEFF STUART SALTZMAN

Associate Producer Lori Putnam

Production Associate Amy Himsel Radecki

Post-Production Coordinator Naomi Spiro

Visual Effects Compositors
Scott Davids Riskone_Digital • Jim Kuroda

Transcriptionist Gena Hymowech

Color by Eric Putz

Assistant Editor Jessica Spiro

Post-Production Audio NL3 Audio

Online Services Provided by Different by Design / HD Cinema

Location Audio Matt Radecki

Present Day Attu Photography Tom Putnam

Additional Music Yuval Ron and Lodge Worster

"PEPITA"

Written by Joseph G. Burns and John Convertino

Published by Good Clean Dirt and Lunada Bay

Performed by Calexico

Courtesy of Touch and Go / Quarterstick Records (BMI)

STUDIO MUSICIANS

Phil Feather cello

John Hubbard cello

Mader accordion

Lowell Michelson drums

Kate O'Brien violin

Kevan Torfeh woodwinds

FEATURED INTERVIEWS

Woodrow Arndt

Ian W. Beaton

Walter Bradshaw

Dayton Drewry

Edward Dupont

Armando Gonzales

Major Michael Haller, Alaska Air National Guard

Marvin Hiatt

Robert Hoffmeir

Chief Allan J. Jantz, USCG

William S. Jones

Albert King

Michael McLaughlin

DC2 Jeff Murphy, USCG

Roy Patterson

Andrew Petrus

Owen Pierce

Laura Tatsaguchi-Davis

STILLS AND MOTION PICTURE FOOTAGE COURTESY OF

Alaska State Library, Evelyn Butler and George Dale Collection

Woodrow Arndt • Armando Gonzales • Grinberg Library

Donald Jones • William S. Jones • Albert King

Terry Longordo, Lake-Sumter Community College • Earl McCombs

Mike McLaughlin • National Archives II, College Park, Maryland

The Orlando Sentinel • Roy & Mickey Patterson • Andrew Petrus

Ron V. Regan, Sr. • Laura Tatsaguchi-Davis

Ted Spencer, Alaska Historical Aviation Institute

Univ of Alaska Fairbanks, San Francisco Call-Bulletin Collection

Captured Japanese Photos Courtesy of Ian W. Beaton

Very Special Thanks

THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

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James Underwood • Dan Waldschmidt

AND THE CREW OF USCG LORAN STATION ATTU
Robert A. Kaufman Jr., Commanding Officer

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FURTHER READING

"The Aleutian Warriors," by John Haile Cloe
"The Capture of Attu," Compiled by Lt. Robert J. Mitchell
"The Forgotten War," by Stan Cohen
"They Also Serve," by Ian W. Beaton
"The Thousand-Mile War," by Brian Garfield
"When the Wind Was a River," by Dean Kohlhoff

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